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ABSTRACT

The mass communication and society section of the Proceedings contains the following 17 papers: "Deviance in News Coverage of On-Line Communications: A Print Media Comparison" (Lisa M. Weidman); "Political Tolerance of Environmental Protest: The Roles of Generalized and Specialized Information" (Catherine A. Steele and Carol M. Liebler); "First Ladies: A Look at Coverage in Two Major Newspapers" (Erica Scharrer and Jacqueline Arnold); "Agenda-Setting with an Ethnic-Relevant Topic: Ethnicity and Public Salience of Illegal Immigration" (Michael B. Salwen and Frances R. Matera); "Media Dependency Theory and the Perception of Violence in Professional Ice Hockey" (Quint B. Randle); "The Mediating Role of Public Mood: New Explorations in the Relationship between Media Use and Political Knowledge/Attitudes" (Ekaterina Ognianova and others); "Finding the Smoking Gun: Local Media and Community Ties" (Debra Merskin and Mara Huberlie); "Roles Journalists Play: An Examination of Journalists' Roles as Manifested in Samples of Their Best Work" (Divya C. McMillin); "Online Cities: Are They Building a Virtual Public Sphere or Expanding Consumption Communities?" (Sally J. McMillan and Kathryn B. Campbell); "Drug Problems and Government Solutions: A Frame Analysis of Front-Page Newspaper Headlines about the Drug Issue, 1987-1994" (Robert W. Leweke); "The Press and the Not-So-Mean Streets: The Relative Influence of the Media on Public Knowledge of Crime Rates" (Thomas J. Johnson and others); "On the N- and F-Words: Quantifying the Taboo" (Paul Martin Lester); "Building the Terrorism Agenda, 1981-1994: The Media, the President and Real World Cues" (Patrick M. Jablonski and Christopher Sullivan); "'Sports Illustrated', 'The War on Drugs,' and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990: A Study in Agenda Building and Political Timing" (Bryan Denham); "News from Hell before Breakfast: The Clash of Military and Media Cultures during the Persian Gulf War" (Jay DeFrank); "The Private Line: How Theodore Vail of AT&T Invoked the Concept of 'Public Interest' to Enhance the Company's Position as a Monopoly" (Kerry Anderson Crooks); and "The Paradox of Parenting Magazines: Cultivation Theory and Information Seeking" (Valerie Barker and David Dozier). Individual papers contain references. (RS)

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Running Head: Deviance in News Coverage of On-line Communications

Deviance in News Coverage of On-line Communications:
A Print Media Comparison

Lisa M. Weidman
S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
Syracuse University

Author Information:
Address: 225 Cambridge Street, Syracuse, New York 13210
Phone: (315) 423-7902
E-mail: lweidman@mailbox.syr.edu

Abstract

This study advances the argument that deviance is employed as a component of newsworthiness to varying degrees by different types of information providers. The author examines coverage of on-line communications in specialized and general interest publications and compares them in terms of four dimensions of deviance (conflict, sensationalism, prominence, and novelty) and finds that newspaper articles have more conflict and sensationalism than articles in more specialized publications, specifically business publications and computer magazines.

Deviance in News Coverage of On-line Communications:
A Print Media Comparison

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, residents of the United States have witnessed the emergence of a new mass medium: on-line communications. Commercial on-line services, such as CompuServe, Prodigy, and America Online, as well as a number of internet access providers, have made it possible for a great number of people (approximately 30 million, so far[1]) to make use of this medium, which was previously only available to universities and research institutions.

With the increase in the number of users has come considerable media coverage of on-line developments. In 1994 the phrase "information superhighway" became *the* buzzword, and motoring metaphors were published ad nauseam, thanks in part to President Clinton and Vice President Gore, who put the subject on the national agenda. News coverage of on-line developments took several forms: level-headed reporting of what actually exists today, speculation about future possibilities, and exaggerations of both the opportunities and the hazards of the "infobahn."

Meanwhile, a vast array of legal and ethical problems have cropped up on the internet and the commercial on-line services. Theft, fraud, libel, sexual harassment, invasion of privacy, obscenity, and child pornography are among the crimes allegedly being committed on-line. Many of these developments have been deemed newsworthy,as well. Much of this coverage has involved speculation as to how existing communications laws and regulations will (or won't) be applied to on-line communications.

Though still in its formative years, on-line communication provides a plethora of research opportunities for communications scholars. Existing media effects theories can be tested in this new arena, and on-line content can be analyzed and compared to that of other media. The extensive traditional media coverage of on-line developments provides an excellent opportunity for researchers to further examine influences on news content. Taking advantage of that opportunity, this study continues a line of inquiry into the role deviance plays in news selection by looking at how different types of print media have reported on the legal issues regarding on-line communications. I hypothesize that there is a difference in the coverage offered by newspapers, as opposed to more specialized publications, such as the general business press and computer magazines.

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[1] As reported in *Money* magazine by L. Graham, "Eight good reasons to go on-line." December, 1994, p. 110.

THEORY

Influences on News Content

The study of news content is closely associated with some long-standing mass communication models. In their introduction to *The Manufacture of News* (1981), editors Stanley Cohen and Jock Young identify two "polarized traditions" (p. 13) with regard to news content. These are the mass manipulative or hegemony model and the market or commercial model (p. 13). The mass manipulative model sees the media as controlled by a "monolithic and powerful source" in the service of the ruling class and used to "mystify and manipulate the public" (p. 13). This model is derived from Marxist theory and the writings of Antonio Gramsci. The market model "argues that there is variety and diversity in the information and opinions presented by the mass media and that such variation minimizes the chances of manipulation. Principles such as 'give the public what it wants' (and their commercial implications), rather than some manipulative conspiracy, are what determine how the media select and present information" (p. 13).

The market model has recently been explicated by John McManus (1994) in response to a trend among media owners to apply the market model intentionally—

especially the "give the public what it wants" aspect—to their news operations to better facilitate the selling of the news (p.1). Under "market-driven journalism," as McManus calls it, the reader is a "customer," the news is a "product," and the circulation or signal area is a "market" (p. 1). McManus equates this trend with the trend toward concentrated ownership. "As newspapers, television stations, even the networks, have been sold by the families of those entrepreneurs [who started them] to investors on Wall Street, more and more of the nation's news is being produced by corporations whose stockholders seek to maximize return on their investment" (p. 1), which explains why the jargon of MBA programs and corporate boardrooms has been applied to news and its recipients.

Proponents of the hegemony model include Stuart Hall, Ben Bagdikian, and Todd Gitlin. Hall and several associates (Hall, Chritcher, Jefferson, Clark & Roberts, 1981) have asserted that media content serves to help the powerful to define society (p. 351). They wrote, "...it seems undeniable that the *prevailing tendency* in the media is towards the reproduction, *amidst all their contradictions*, of the definitions of the powerful, of the dominant ideology"(p. 351). This tendency is inherent in the process of newsmaking, they say, "and cannot be ascribed to the wickedness of journalists or their employers" (p. 351).

In his influential book, *The Whole World is Watching* (1980), Todd Gitlin adopts the hegemony model as proposed by Antonio Gramsci in his prison notebooks (p. 9) and modified by critical theorist Raymond Williams in his writings on Marxist theory (p. 10). In applying the hegemony model to late-20th century society, Gitlin asserts that the mass media disseminate the ideology of the "established order," who in his view are not simply the ruling class but "an oligopolized, privately controlled corporate economy and its intimate ally, the bureaucratic national security state, together embedded within a capitalist world complex of nation-states" (p. 9).

Much like Hall et al., Gitlin argues that members of this established order "secure their power...by impressing their definitions of the situation upon those they rule," who willingly cooperate with this arrangement (p. 10). Thus, in Gitlin's view, news content is determined by a cabal of powerful industrialists and the politicians they keep in their back pockets.

However, Gitlin also gives credence to a set of theories of news selection explicated by Herbert J. Gans in *Deciding What's News* (1979). Several of these theories are derived from gatekeeping studies, dating back to David Manning White's "The 'Gate Keeper': A Case Study In The Selection Of News" from 1950 and Warren Breed's "Social Control in the Newsroom" from 1955. These theories, as explained by Gans, are: 1) journalist-centered theory, which says "news is shaped by the professional news judgment of journalists" (Gans, p. 78); 2) organizational theories, which either see news as shaped by commercial imperatives and other pressures of the news firm or as a product of the organizational structure and division of labor of news firms (p. 78-79); 3) mirror theory, which says "events determine story selection, with journalists simply holding a mirror to them and reflecting their image to the audience" (p. 79); and 4) theories of outside forces, which explain story selection as the result of one or more external forces, such as media technologies, the national economy, government and economic structures, cultural values, audience preferences, or news sources (p. 79).

Gitlin finds these theories useful, and he commends Gans for looking "both inside and outside news organizations for explanations of the news" (1980, p. 251). But he contends that these theories are not "ample" enough to define social change movements, which is the subject of his text (p. 251).

As for Gans, he finds a degree of truth in each of these types of theories and offers, as his own approach, something of a composite of all four frameworks. He sees story selection as a tug of war between sources, journalists, and audiences, such that sources determine the availability of news to journalists, and journalists determine the suitability of news for audiences (1979, p. 81). The social structure outside the newsroom determines who gets to be a source; thus, the economically and politically powerful hold sway over news content, as they are more likely to be used as news sources than those who lack such power. For the most part, however, Gans sees journalists as independent entities, free from organizationally and societally imposed pressures. "Television and magazine journalists," he writes, "are not under constant pressure to increase firm income" (p. 83).

J. Herbert Altschull might well have scoffed at Gans' vision of journalists as independent from corporate pressures. In his 1984 book *Agents of Power* Altschull refers to this view as the "folklore of the independence of the press" (p. 254). "The press mythology," he explains, "holds that it is from politicians that the pressure for conformity comes, not from the moneyed interests. The reality...is that the content of the press is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the press" (p. 254).

Altschull applies the old adage "He who pays the piper calls the tune" to the way news organizations operate (p. 254). He proposes that the relationship between news media (the piper) and their financiers (the paymaster) can take one or a combination of four different forms: "official, commercial, interest, and informal" (p. 254). In the official pattern, the content of a particular medium is determined by the government in which that medium exists, either by direct ownership or regulation (and subsidy, in some cases). In the commercial pattern, content is determined by advertisers, owners and publishers. In the interest pattern, content reflects the ideology of the financing enterprise, when such enterprise is a political or religious organization, and in the informal pattern, content "mirrors the goals of relatives, friends, or acquaintances, who supply money directly or who exercise their influence to ensure that the piper is heard" (p. 254).

On the subject of who has the *most* control over news content, John McManus places his money, so to speak, on the internal financiers. "The degree of control exercised by [various] outside forces...rarely matches the influence investors/owners wield through top management. Of the four trading partners--consumers, advertisers, sources and investors--only the last is the boss." (1994, p. 32)

Ben Bagdikian would agree. He has written extensively about the control that media owners have over news content (e.g., 1971; 1992, and earlier editions). He has expressed particular concern over the fact that a diminishing number of corporate owners control an ever increasing proportion of the media. In the introduction to his book on the subject, *The Media Monopoly* (1992[2]), he applies the hegemony model but argues that the powers inflicting their ideology on the populace are those who own the media. He calls the individuals who control these corporations "a new Private Ministry of Information and Culture" (p. xxviii). Invoking agenda-setting theory, he asserts that "the modern systems of news, information, and popular culture...shape the consensus of society...More than any other single private source and often more than any governmental source, the fifty dominant media corporations can set the national agenda" (p. xxviii).

In "Building a Theory of News Content: A Synthesis of Current Approaches" (with Elizabeth Kay Mayfield, 1987), Pamela J. Shoemaker reviews these various explanations of news content, then takes Altschull's view that those who finance the media have the most control over news content. She adds, however, that this control is mediated by other forces:

> "The influence of financier ideology is not necessarily direct. It operates through the entire process of gathering, shaping and transmitting news, with differing patterns of competition, interaction with social and institutional forces, journalists' orientations and newsgathering routines resulting from each unique mix of financing sources." (1987, p. 23)

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[2] The introduction was actually written for the first edition of the book, which was published in 1983.

In her book *Gatekeeping* (1991) Shoemaker further explicates the various approaches to this line of inquiry and identifies five levels of analysis into which these approaches fall. These levels of analysis are:

1) the individual level–examining how the attitudes and preferences of the individual communication worker influence media content,
2) the communication routines level–examining how the routines of newsgathering, such as deadlines and the inverted pyramid, affect media content,
3) the organizational level–examining how the culture, policies and ideologies of the organization affect news content,
4) the "extramedia, social/institutional level" (p. 60)–examining how external forces, such as sources, audiences, advertisers, other media, governments, and interest groups, affect media content, and
5) the social system level–examining how the culture, societal interests, societal structure, and societal ideology affect media content (Shoemaker, 1991, pp. 33-70).

In this text Shoemaker takes a step back from the position that media financiers have more control over content than other forces. However, she keeps owner ideology in the mix as she develops a complex new gatekeeping model that incorporates the influences brought into the process by individuals, newsmaking routines, media organizations, social and institutional forces, and the social system in which the news medium exists.

In *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (1996), Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese further advance the study of news content by placing these theories into the larger context of mass communications research and explaining their importance in terms of the effect that mass media content have on our shared perceptions of reality.

Newsworthiness

Much of Shoemaker's own research on news content has been conducted at the media routines level with a particular interest in the newsworthiness concept (1982; 1983; 1984; Shoemaker, Chang & Brendlinger, 1987; Chang, Shoemaker & Brendlinger, 1987; Shoemaker, Danielian & Brendlinger, 1991). The present study will follow in this line of inquiry.

Part of a reporter's job is to identify events that are newsworthy, and, for the most part, only those events that are deemed newsworthy by a reporter or editor will become news. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) explain that "this news judgment is the ability to evaluate stories based on agreed-upon news values, which provide yardsticks of newsworthiness and constitute an audience-oriented routine" (p. 111).

News values are taught in journalism schools, and all reporters are expected to understand the news values of the medium for which they work. While every newsroom may use slightly different criteria, a typical list of newsworthy characteristics, compiled by Shoemaker (1987), includes: "timeliness; proximity; importance, impact, or consequence; interest; conflict or controversy; sensationalism; prominence; and novelty, oddity, or the unusual" (p. 163).

The last four criteria on this list are of particular interest here. These four indicators have been identified by Shoemaker, Chang, & Brendlinger (1987) as "the deviance dimension of newsworthiness" (p. 351) in that "an assessment of deviance underlies [each of these] indicators" (p. 349).

Defining Deviance

Deviance represents a sizable area of social science research but a relatively small area of mass communication research. Thus, our definitions of deviance come out of sociology and social psychology and the work of Becker (1963), Bell

(1976) and Wells (1978), among others. From the cumulative efforts of these researchers Shoemaker has explicated five conceptions of deviance (1987):

1) a statistical definition (that which strays a statistically significant distance from the mean)
2) a pathological definition (unhealthy behavior or behavior that would radically change the entity being studied)
3) a normative definition (behavior that violates a social norm or law)
4) a labeling definition (behavior that is considered deviant only when someone labels it as such)
5) a self-conception definition (behavior that is known to be "wrong" or disapproved by the person exhibiting the behavior) (pp. 153-157).

This study focuses primarily on the statistical and normative definitions of deviance as they relate to the four indicators in the deviance dimension of newsworthiness—conflict or controversy, sensationalism, prominence, and novelty—as defined by Shoemaker, Chang and Brendlinger (1987). Conflict and controversy are newsworthy because "they involve changes in customs and values, social unrest, and changes in the status quo" (pp. 351-352). Sensationalism is newsworthy for much the same reason as conflict and controversy; it involves the breaking of norms. In addition, it tends to involve taboos, which are rarely broken, leading to statistical deviance. Prominence refers to people and other entities that are well known or highly placed in society. This involves statistical deviance, as well. "When a successful actor marries or divorces, the event is publicized worldwide. Such events are newsworthy not because of their inherent significance, but rather because of the nature of the people involved" (pp. 352-353). Novelty, oddity or the unusual refers to both normative deviance and statistical deviance.

"Odd people are likely to be deviant, but this category also includes rare events and the unexpected, such as airplane crashes" (p. 353).

Prior Research

Shoemaker's research in this area has consistently found deviance to be an "important theoretical contributor to the newsworthiness concept" (Shoemaker, Danielian & Brendlinger, 1991, p. 794). In a 1983 study of reporting in seven major newspapers, Shoemaker found that "unattributed evaluation words and phrases applied to deviant political groups tended to portray the groups in a negative light, while the attributed information was carefully neutral" (p. 29). In a similar study published in 1984, Shoemaker found that the more deviant the political group, the less legitimately it was portrayed in the seven major newspapers.

In one study published in 1987, Shoemaker, Chang, and Brendlinger found that the more deviant a world event is, the more likely it is to be covered in the U.S. media, and in another study, published the same year, they found that normative deviance and "potential for social change deviance" are two of four important determinants of international news coverage by the U.S. media (p. 410). Similarly, in a 1991 study, Shoemaker, Danielian and Brendlinger found that the more deviant a world event is, the more prominently it will be covered in the U.S. media.

Evidence that deviance is an important aspect of newsworthiness can be found in the writings of other scholars, as well. Jock Young has written that "...the Western media are obsessed with that which violates the depiction of society as an orderly consensus...These anomalies...are the basis of news because...they violate the public's sense of conceptual order and they violate their sense of justice" (1981, p. 395).

Hall et al. (1981) explain news judgment in much the same way:

> "At the most general level, this involves an orientation to items which are 'out of the ordinary,' which in some way breach our 'normal' expectations about social life, the sudden earthquake or the moon-landing, for example. We might call this the *primary* or *cardinal news value* (pp. 335-336).

The research conducted thus far has primarily examined the issue in terms of whether or not deviant events were covered in the news media. I propose another way of assessing the importance of deviance as a component of newsworthiness: evaluating the deviance of what is published, both in terms of which events are reported (whether or not elements of the story are deviant) and the way in which they are reported (the angle, spin, or tone of the story).

These indicators were inspired by Hall et al. (1981), who wrote that "journalists will tend to play up the extraordinary, dramatic, tragic, etc. elements in a story in order to enhance its newsworthiness [and] that events which score high on a number of these news values will have greater news potential than ones that do not" (p. 336). Mean deviance scores for a number of articles will provide a basis for comparison, between authors, between publications of like kind, and between different types of publications or different types of news media. Such comparisons have not yet been attempted; studies of this kind have generally looked only at mainstream or elite media or have been conducted under the assumption that all news media employ essentially the same news values, similarly weighted, to determine the newsworthiness of events.

I propose that this assumption be reconsidered. First, we must acknowledge that not all information of current events is delivered via mainstream media; other outlets do exist and are quite popular. As the mass media have moved away from general-interest products and toward special-interest products over the past forty years (particularly in magazines, television/cable and radio programming), a huge number of information sources has become available (Biagi, 1992, pp. 98, 145, 190).

For example, in the U.S. alone, approximately 12,000 magazines provide information on every imaginable topic (p. 100), and many of them reach several million readers with each issue (p. 104).

However, the increase in information sources has not been accompanied by an equal increase in audience members; in fact, these specialized media are competing for the attention of essentially the same number of audience members as the fewer, more general media once were. In fact, stiff competition for audiences is what led to specialization in the first place. Media owners sought to gain a competitive edge by finding a unique niche, thus enabling them to attract specialized advertisers and committed audiences (p. 103). In so doing, they have differentiated their content. As a result, we should not assume that these outlets employ the same criteria in selecting news for their audiences that the mainstream media employ. Even where some of the same criteria are used, they may be valued differently.

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following hypothesis:

> A relationship exists between the type of news medium and its coverage of on-line legal issues, such that the more general the purpose and broader the audience of the medium, the more deviant the story content will be.

Specifically, when assigned a deviance rating and compared, major newspapers will have a higher rating than general business publications, and these will have a higher deviance rating than computer magazines. The idea that the general circulation media will have more deviant content—in essence, that they will place a higher value on deviance as a component of newsworthiness—relates to their purpose and the type of audience they are trying to attract.

Newspapers, which are more closely tied to traditional news values, have a broader role to play in society than specialized magazines. They must report daily (in most cases) on the most important or exceptional events of a large, heterogeneous society, and, according to many theorists (e.g., Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Fishman, 1982; Gitlin, 1980; Tuchman, 1978), their reports must both reinforce social norms and reassure us that everything will be okay. Because newspapers report on a broad range of topics, the percentage of events that become news stories is very small. It follows, then, that the more specialized the publication, the larger the percentage of relevant events that become published stories. Thus, specialized publications are less reliant on the traditional criteria of newsworthiness to aid in the selection of news.

METHOD

Operational Definitions

The method used in this research is content analysis of U.S. newspapers and magazines. The independent variable is type of news medium, and the dependent variables are components of deviance: conflict, sensationalism, prominence, and novelty. I selected three types of news media for comparison in this study: major daily newspapers, general business and financial publications, and computer magazines. Publications were categorized on the basis of their general purpose and content and on Standard Rate and Data Service (SRDS) classifications.[3] Within each category the individual publications are assumed to be relatively homogenous in that they serve essentially the same purpose and compete for the same type of audience—or the very same audience—and for the same type of advertisers.[4] Each category is operationally defined as follows:

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[3] Daily newspapers are listed together in the SRDS Newspaper Advertising Source (June 1995). General business publications are listed together under a separate heading, as are computer magazines, in the SRDS Business Publications Advertising Source (April 1995).

[4] This assumption is based on descriptions of editorial content and audiences found in the SRDS Advertising Source books and to some extent on the author's personal knowledge, gained while the advertising manager at a 350,000-circulation consumer magazine.

Type 1: Computer magazines (trades and consumer titles), whose basic purpose is the dissemination of news specific to the computer industry to people employed in that industry, particularly those responsible for purchasing computer equipment, and to consumers of computer products with a particular interest in reading about those products and the industry. Publications in this category include *PC WEEK, Home Office Computing, InformationWeek,* and *Online,* among others.

Type 2: Business and financial newspapers and magazines, whose basic purpose is the dissemination of business and financial market news to an audience that has a stake or special interest in a fairly broad range of business and financial matters, such as "international business, science and technology, information processing, management trends, marketing, corporate strategies, financial markets, government, personal business, and important people" (Business Week listing, SRDS, 1995). Publications in this category include *Crain's Cleveland Business, Warfield's Business Record, Forbes,* and *Business Week,* among others. Magazines specific to a single trade or industry were not included in this category.

Type 3: General circulation newspapers, whose basic purpose is the dissemination of a virtually unlimited range of news topics (including sports; economic developments; politics; travel and leisure activities; real estate; health, fitness and medical developments; science and technology; food, cooking and entertaining; business and financial news; and entertainment) to a large, heterogeneous audience. Publications in this category include *The Chicago Sun-Times, The New York Times, The Dallas Morning News,* and *The San Diego Union-Tribune,* among others.

These three categories were chosen because they represent a continuum in relation to the news topic under consideration. Type 1 media are narrowly focused on on-line communications and closely related topics; Type 2 media are somewhat more broadly focused ; and Type 3 media have a very general focus. But articles about on-line legal issues can be found in all three types of media.

Amount of deviance in a story was determined by the extent to which the story contains the four components of deviance discussed earlier: conflict or controversy; sensationalism; prominence; and novelty, oddity, or the unusual (Shoemaker, 1987, p. 163). Stories were given a separate score, ranging from 0 to 3, for each of these dimensions. A score of zero indicated no conflict, sensationalism, etc. in the story, and a score of 3 indicated a high level of conflict, etc. in the story. Please see the attached Coding Instructions for explicit definitions of each value for each dimension.

Source/Sampling Design

In order to capture data from all three types of media, three searches on the Nexis database were conducted. Using a chain of search terms,[5] I searched the "mags" sub-directory for computer magazine articles, the "busfin/curnws" (business and finance, current news) sub-directory for articles from the business press[6], and the "major papers" sub-directory for newspaper articles. The search chain also specified a time frame of October, 1993, through September, 1995.[7]

Some of the articles called up by these searches did not fit into any of the three media categories being used in this study. These elements were eliminated on the grounds that they were not appropriate.

In addition, some of the articles called up by the three searches were identical. In this case one copy was kept in the appropriate search population, and duplicates were eliminated. For example, articles that originally ran in a newspaper's business section often appeared on both the "major papers" search list and the "business and finance" search list. It was decided that these articles would be kept in the "major papers" category (with the other newspaper articles) because the business and technology sections of newspapers are part of the breadth of coverage by which newspapers are defined as "general interest."

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[5] The sequence was "on-line or online or internet or cyber! w/5 libel or copyright or porn! or obscenity or harassment or fraud or theft."

[6] The Wall Street Journal was not included in this study because its articles are not available in their original form through Nexis/Lexis.

[7] Very few articles regarding on-line legal issues appeared before October, 1993.

All remaining stories were then examined for relevance. Stories were deemed relevant if they dealt primarily with one or more legal issues related to the use of on-line communications, such as libel, invasion of privacy, copyright, obscenity, pornography, sexual harassment, fraud, or theft.

After inappropriate articles were removed, the sample consisted of 29 computer magazine articles and 31 articles from business publications, all of which were used in the study. The Nexis search for relevant newspaper articles yielded a much larger number of stories, as might be expected, so a sampling frame was devised in order to select a random sample from the Nexis output. The desired sample size was 50, so every 6th story was selected from the 302 stories that met the criteria. This process resulted in a sample size of 49.

Coding

Before formal coding began, a sub-sample of 15 stories was coded by two coders to assess the reliability of the coding instrument. The coders rated each story on a scale of zero to three for each of the four dimensions of deviance. Intercoder agreement was found to be sufficiently high using Scott's pi (Holsti, 1969, p. 140):

Conflict = .77
Sensationalism = .67
Prominence = .64
Novelty = .79

When intercoder reliability had been established, the researcher coded the remainder of the sample. In order to compare the different types of media, the conflict scores within each sub-sample were averaged, and the averages were compared. Then the sensationalism scores within each medium were averaged and the averages compared. This process was repeated to arrive at mean scores for each type of medium on each dimension.

The original intent was to form an index with these four dimensions of deviance, but a test of the validity of the index, using Cronbach's alpha, provided unfavorable results. So hypothesis tests were run on each of the dimensions.

Statistics Used In The Analysis

The independent variable here (type of medium) can be measured at the ordinal level if the attributes are ranked ordered as "very narrow" (computer magazines), "somewhat narrow" (business press), and "very broad" (daily newspapers). The dependent variables (conflict, sensationalism, prominence, and novelty) can be measured at the interval level. Thus, I used analysis of variance and Bonferroni multiple comparison tests to analyze the data. From the ANOVAs I expected to learn whether the three types of print media were significantly different in their mean deviance ratings, and from the Bonferroni procedure I expected to pinpoint where any differences uncovered by the ANOVA's *F* test might be. I chose to use the Bonferroni procedure rather than independent samples t-tests in order to reduce Type I error.

RESULTS

The hypothesis being tested here stated that a relationship exists between the type of news medium and its coverage of on-line legal issues, such that the more general the purpose and broader the audience of the medium, the more deviant the story content will be. In other words, business publications will have higher scores on the four dimensions of deviance than computer magazines, and major daily newspapers will have scores that are higher still.

One hundred and nine cases were examined, of which 44% were newspaper articles, 30% were articles from business publications, and 26% were computer magazine articles (Table 1).

Table 1. Percentages of Articles

Type of news medium	%
Daily newspapers	45.0
Business publications	28.4
Computer magazines	26.6
	100%
	(N = 109)

A review of the descriptive statistics and distributions of each of the dependent variables revealed fairly normal-looking distributions for conflict, sensationalism, and prominence. However, the distribution of novelty scores, which only had a range of two because all stories in the sample were given a score of either 2 or 3, did not approximate normality. Not surprisingly, the novelty dimension had the largest mean and the smallest standard deviation (Table 2).

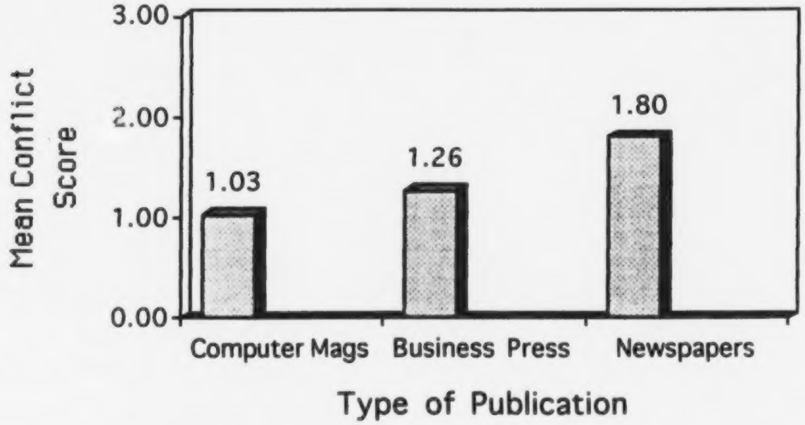
Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Dimensions of Deviance

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Conflict or controversy (0-3)	1.44	.80	109
Computer Magazines	1.03	.63	
Business Publications	1.26	.77	
Major Newspapers	1.80	.76	
Sensationalism (0-3)	1.31	.89	109
Computer Magazines	.93	.88	
Business Publications	1.26	.86	
Major Newspapers	1.57	.84	
Prominence (0-3)	1.52	1.02	109
Computer Magazines	1.24	.91	
Business Publications	1.45	.89	
Major Newspapers	1.74	1.13	
Novelty (0-3)	2.77	.42	109
Computer Magazines	2.72	.46	
Business Publications	2.74	.45	
Major Newspapers	2.82	.39	

ANOVA Results

As Figures 1 through 4 indicate, the direction of the mean deviance scores of the three categories of news media support the idea that there is a relationship between type of news medium and amount of deviance in stories about on-line legal issues. Articles from computer magazines received the lowest scores, articles from business publications were in the middle, and newspaper articles received the highest scores for all four dimensions of deviance. However, not all of these differences were found to be statistically significant. The analyses of variance revealed statistically significant differences between the mean scores of conflict and sensationalism but not of prominence or novelty, as indicated below each bar chart.

Figure 1. Conflict Scores by Media Type

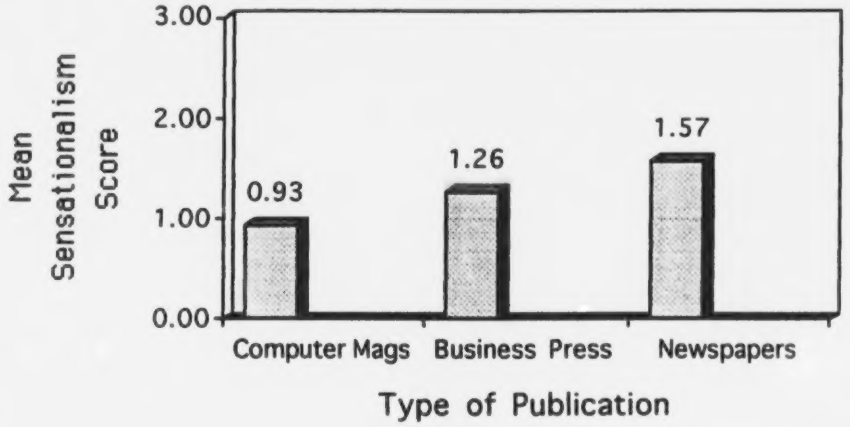


F = 11.19 df = 2 Statistically significant at p < .001.

Conflict

The large *F* ratio of 11.19 resulting from the analysis of variance on conflict indicates high between-group variance and, thus, supports the hypothesis, as well. This *F* ratio is shown to be statistically significant (p < .001), which further supports the hypothesis.

Figure 2. Sensationalism Scores by Media Type

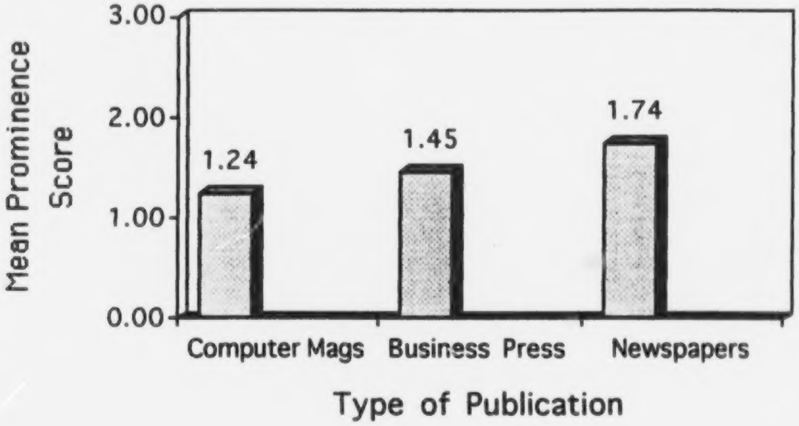


F = 5.18 df = 2 Statistically significant at p < .01.

Sensationalism

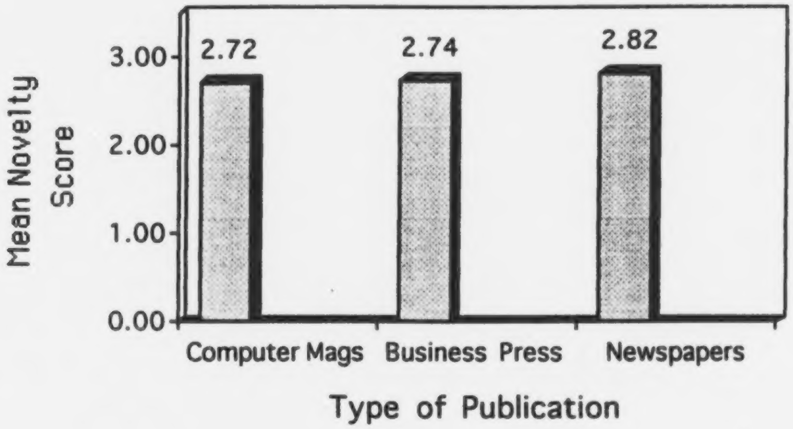
The *F* ratio of 5.18 resulting from the ANOVA on sensationalism indicates somewhat less between-group variance and more within-group variance, but this value is also statistically significant (p < .01) and, thus, supports the hypothesis.

Figure 3. Prominence Scores by Media Type



F = 2.27 df = 2 p < .11.

Figure 4. Novelty Scores by Media Type



F = .53 df = 2 Not statistically significant.

Prominence and Novelty

The *F* ratios for prominence and novelty are small, indicating little difference between the between-group variance and the within-group variance, and neither of these values is statistically significant. Thus, the hypothesis is not supported in terms of these two dimensions of deviance.

Bonferroni Results

As mentioned earlier, a more stringent hypothesis test was also performed to pinpoint areas of significant difference. Like the ANOVAs, the Bonferroni multiple comparison test identified significant differences in the mean scores for conflict and sensationalism. For conflict, significant differences were found between computer magazines and newspapers and between business publications and newspapers, but not between computer magazines and business publications. For sensationalism, only the difference between computer magazines and newspapers was found to be significant.

Thus, some support for the hypothesis was found in these significance tests. Newspapers articles regarding on-line legal issues were found to contain more conflict and sensationalism than computer magazine articles on the same subject, and newspaper articles on this subject were found to contain more conflict than business press articles.

DISCUSSION

Contributions of the Study

This study set out to accomplish three goals:

1) to support the notion that "deviance is an important theoretical contributor to the newsworthiness concept" (Shoemaker, Danielian & Brendlinger, 1991, p. 794),
2) to meaningfully evaluate the deviance of published articles without prior knowledge or evaluation of the deviance of specific events, and
3) to show that the importance of the deviance component of newsworthiness varies in different types of news media.

The results of this study do tend to support the findings of Shoemaker and her various associates. Though this study does not directly replicate any of Shoemaker's studies and thus does not directly support her findings with regard to negative portrayals of deviant groups (Shoemaker, 1983, 1984) or the coverage of deviant world events in U.S. news media (Shoemaker, Chang & Brendlinger, 1987; Shoemaker, Danielian & Brendlinger, 1991), it does seem to further confirm the importance of deviance (or at least conflict and sensationalism) as a component of newsworthiness, particularly among general circulation newspapers.

This study has made progress with regard to the second goal, as well. Analyzing the deviance of what has been published, both in terms of the entities and events that were reported and the ways in which they were reported, did allow for meaningful comparisons of different types of media and did yield statistically significant results in two of the four comparisons made.

With regard to the third goal, this study did show differences in the deviance of stories in different types of news media. While it did not show significant differences between the two more narrowly focused media, computer magazines and business publications, this study did show significant differences between these publications and the all-purpose media aimed at a broad audience, i.e., newspapers, at least in terms of conflict and sensationalism.

Perhaps the two greatest contributions of this study are 1) that it opens up the field of inquiry to include important information sources (such as specialized magazines) in addition to the mainstream and elite media (such as major metropolitan newspapers and network television news) that have been studied in the past and 2) it indicates that different types of information providers employ different sets of news values in the news selection process.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The reliability of this study is limited due to the small sample size and the fact that the sample was acquired through the Nexis database. For the business publication and computer magazine samples, all appropriate articles that were available on Nexis were used. In other words, in the two year time frame chosen, only 29 computer magazine articles and 33 business publication articles concerning on-line legal issues were posted on the Nexis database (assuming a broader set of search terms would not have yielded a greater number of equally appropriate articles). Such a small search yield precludes random sampling from the Nexis population. This is one of the risks of using Nexis or any news-text database to acquire a sample for content analysis; you only get a small portion of any population of articles, and what you get may not be representative (Kaufman, Dykers &

Caldwell, 1993). Thus, randomization is not guaranteed, even if you select a random sample from a larger Nexis search yield, as was done here with the newspaper articles.

As mentioned earlier, this topic, on-line legal issues, is very new, sometimes sensational, often controversial, and, thus, inherently deviant. While it seems to make sense to conduct this research on a topic with some of these qualities—after all, if it is not newsworthy, it will not appear in the media at all—it is possible that the results of this study would have been different had I chosen a topic that was less charged with all of these components of deviance. Only further applications of this method will tell us whether or not this is the case.

Perhaps the biggest problem with this study is the fact that the four components of deviance could not be used as an additive index. Though they were based on a strong theoretical and logical foundation, they did not make a meaningful index when subjected to Cronbach's alpha. As individual variables they do not support the argument that deviance is a key component of newsworthiness as strongly as they would if they had formed a valid index, particularly since two of the variables did not show significant differences between the different types of media.

Another limitation of the study is the lack of significance in some of the comparisons. While differences were found between the mean scores for computer magazines and business publications for every dimension of deviance tested, none of these differences was statistically significant. This may indicate that these two kinds of publications and their audiences are not so different, after all.

Future research should involve larger sample sizes, even if this means giving up the ease and speed of Nexis. Given that all of the variables did show differences among the types of publications in the direction that was predicted by the hypothesis, one could argue that a larger sample would reduce chance error and make those differences statistically significant.

Future research should also explore different ways of defining deviance and the components of deviance. Perhaps a different set of dimensions or additional measures of deviance would form a satisfactory index. As mentioned above, replication of this study on another topic might also prove fruitful.

Further exploration of the "importance" issue would also be useful. This would involve inquiry into the reasons for which deviance is played up more in newspapers than in more specialized media. Is the deviance component of newsworthiness really more important in the eyes of newspaper journalists than it is to journalists on the specialized publications, and, if so, why? A survey of newspaper and magazine journalists might be required.

Finally, future research may turn to media effects inquiries to investigate whether the more deviant frame presented by the general circulation media is creating or perpetuating a knowledge gap between the computer and on-line literate and those who are "logged out."

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Political tolerance of environmental protest:

The roles of generalized and specialized information

by

Catherine A. Steele, Ph.D.

and

Carol M. Liebler, Ph.D.

S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications
Syracuse University
215 University Place
Syracuse, NY 13244-2100

Contact:

C. A. Steele
(315) 443-4118
casteele@mailbox.syr.edu

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Political tolerance of environmental protest: The roles of generalized and specialized information

TYPICAL EARTH FIRST! PROTEST:
SPONTANEOUS, LEADERLESS, ACTIVISM:
LONGTIME GROUP MEMBER SAYS 'ACTIONS'
SUCH AS MONDAY'S BLOCKAGE OF TOLLWAY CONSTRUCTION
EQUIPMENT ARE USUALLY LAST MINUTE EFFORTS
(Los Angeles Times, Sept. 28, 1993, p. A17)

Introduction.

The above headline is illustrative of the media's tendency to challenge the legitimacy of social protest while often highlighting the threat it poses to society (Gitlin, 1980; Shoemaker, 1984). Certainly Earth First! can be considered among the more radical of environmental groups, but framing environmentalists and environmental protesters as deviants is not unique to this group. Furthermore, national environmental groups do not have much power over how they are covered, although more prestigious groups such as the Sierra Club may carry more weight with media gatekeepers (Corbett, 1995). Regardless of the news peg, environmental reporting often oversimplifies controversy, emphasizing frames not reliant upon complex scientific arguments — typically those counter to environmental concerns (Liebler & Bendix, 1996). This tendency may increase the likelihood that environmentalists be perceived as less legitimate than other actors involved in a controversy.

The implications of media coverage of environmental issues and controversy are far reaching. Research reveals a negative relationship between reliance on television news and environmental knowledge (Steger, Pierce, Lovrich & Steel, 1988). Yet, in at least two studies, respondents reported television was their primary source for environmental information (Atwater, Salwen & Anderson, 1985; Wilson, 1993). Newspaper reliance elicits higher levels of environmental knowledge (Steger et al., 1988), but nonetheless, the environmental knowledge levels among the U. S. public are rather poor (Arcury, 1990; Wilson, 1993).

Where and how people seek policy-related information and their ensuing knowledge and attitudes are central to the democratic process. Arguably, no concept is more germane to the heart of democratic society than the focus of this study— political tolerance. Defined as the public's support for civil liberties such as free speech, free press, and free assembly (Stouffer, 1955) as it applied to "non-conformist" groups, researchers began to focus on political tolerance during the Red Scare of the 1940's and 1950's.

The present study investigates whether political tolerance might be facilitated through a general model of people's media usage and information processing, or through a specialized information model which includes information seeking and knowledge. Central to our study is the claim that knowledge (through the socializing effects of education) enhances information acquisition, media consumption, and information processing.

The political tolerance literature.

Our study addresses three constraints in the tolerance literature. First, although tolerance may vary by target group (Nunn, Crockett, & Williams, 1978, 1978; Thompson, 1996), researchers have tended to focus on "traditional" targets of intolerance— homosexuals, atheists, communists militarists, and racists— which have been established in national trend studies such as the General Social Survey (GSS). While studies using the GSS items have generated substantive conclusions about political tolerance, comparatively few studies have attempted to study contemporary targets of intolerance. Gibson (1992) has recommended that researchers update items to reflect contemporary social targets. This study examines tolerance of environmentalists, and specifically, environmental protest.

A second constraint arises as a result of studies that implicitly emphasize consensus at the expense of understanding how conflict influences tolerance (Steele, 1993; see also Gans, 1973). Models based on principled tolerance suggest that adherence to democratic norms will be associated with tolerance, such that the expression of tolerance will not vary with the group or act involved (Sniderman, Tetlock, Glaser, Green & Hout, 1989). Other research has found, however, that tolerance varies with the activity and situation (Nunn, et al., 1978; Lawrence, 1976; Sullivan, Piereson & Marcus, 1979). For example, several studies have examined individuals' support for leafletting. As a free speech issue, the action of leafletting may be considered consensual rather than conflictive because this form of protest is legal (Lawrence, 1976). However, contemporary groups have engaged in protest actions that are much more controversial and that clearly vary on legal and ethical dimensions. This study recognizes that a particular group's protest action may be legal, but arguably unethical, thereby creating conflict rather than consensus.

Third, the context in which expression occurs is also critical to an understanding of the dynamics of political tolerance, although the literature varies on this point. In particular, according to Chanley (1994), tolerance is lower when an activity hits home, or when there is a clear threat involved: "commitment to tolerance may become secondary to situational factors, including those who will be affected by allowing a given activity" (p. 360-361). She argues that an additive index across tolerance items will measure only tolerance toward the group involved and will fail to tap the significant variables which may vary by situation.

To summarize, we explore three dimensions of situational tolerance: (1) the perceived morality and legality of environmental protest, (2) the actors involved in the protest, and (3) the degree of personalized threat. Evidence suggests that these three dimensions may influence individuals' willingness to tolerate others. First, individuals' beliefs about whether particular protest actions ought to be permitted influence their tolerance for others' expressions (Lawrence, 1976). These dimensions are particularly applicable to environmental protest where there is great diversity among environmental groups and their strategies and actions (Gottlieb, 1991). Second, the notion that individuals' tolerance may depend on their feelings toward groups has been a dominant line of inquiry in the works of Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus (1982) who have published studies predicated on a "least-liked" model of tolerance. An individual is said to be tolerant when he or she upholds the rights of a group toward which he or she feels most negative. According to this line of research, tolerance depends on which group is involved. Third, research suggests that the degree to which individuals perceive personal threat influences their tolerance for others (Chanley, 1994; Green & Waxman, 1987; Davis, 1995). For example, African Americans have been found to selectively tolerate others, depending on a threat to their existence like the Ku Klux Klan (Davis, p. 17). This finding supports the importance of investigating the context for tolerance.

The role of education.

The main predictors of our study draw upon past research relating media use and information seeking to levels of tolerance, but we modify the model to distinguish between generalized and specialized information. Previous research suggests that it is reasonable to expect that people's experiences with forms of information may be related to education. For example, newspaper readers tend to be more highly educated (see Jeffries, 1986, p. 140).

Despite some inconsistent results and models explaining how one becomes tolerant, scholars have discovered the relatively constant role played by education (Stouffer, 1955, Prothro & Grigg, 1960; Davis, 1975; Wilson, 1975; Lawrence, 1976; Nunn, Crockett & williams, 1978; Bobo & Licari, 1989; McLeod, Steele, Chi & Huang, 1991). But while education may lead to tolerance through shaping one's libertarian values (Golebiouska, 1995), and cognitive complexity may mediate this influence (Bobo & Licari, 1989), why these outcomes occur remains unexplained.

This study helps to explain why those with higher education tend to be more tolerant than the less educated by comparing the contributions of a general model of information consuming and processing with a model of more specific information seeking. That education leads to the development of certain cognitive skills may seem to be a foregone conclusion, but just how education augments tolerance through differences in individuals' uses of information has remained unexplored.

This study proposes a complementary relationship between education and media usage, both of which affect political tolerance. Education may also influence how people seek and use information about the environment. Specifically, we investigate the effects of two dominant models that bridge educational and media experiences.

Conceptualizing the model.

Our theoretical model identifies two routes to tolerance: a generalized experience path and a specialized information path (see Figure 1). Although the model makes contrasting predictions on each path's effect on tolerance, each route recognizes four components: the individual's information seeking predisposition, information source, preferred information processing strategy, and knowledge.

Whether an individual tends to follow one path or another depends on his or her motivation to seek information. Researchers have recognized the role of individuals' cognition in tolerance decisions. Individuals who are high in need for cognition (NFC), a concept which addresses differences in motivation to process information, tend to be more tolerant (Thompson, 1996).

We propose that individuals who are motivated to seek information will tend to follow the information specific route to tolerance. Our model asserts that those who seek environmental information will tend to find it at two sources: They may attend classes which focus on environmental issues and they may alter their information seeking behaviors to accommodate their need for information.

The concept of information seeking derives from concerns of political scientists like Lane (1972) and Downs (1957) who highlighted the importance of citizens' information seeking strategies for political orientations (Nimmo, 1990). Communication researchers have developed a model of the specific processes through which individuals become exposed to information. Donohew and Tipton (1973) postulated that information seeking behaviors comprise an "interface" between situational demands for information and the individual's preferred cognitive style. Information seeking is a pre-exposure activity which is distinct from individuals' attention processes, involvement with content, and message uses (Levy, 1983).

Evidence has tended to support these postulates. Individuals possess a purposeful drive to seek information which varies by issue relevance (Chew, 1991) and which may occur within the confines of their normal media uses (Gantz, Fitzmaurice & Fink, 1991). The latter study is limited by its focus on general new events; the study did not explore the possible relationships to political orientations and attitudes like tolerance. Tolerance is an orientation which is expressly about political situations and therefore it is more likely to be a function of specific information seeking. Our hypothesis is also supported by findings that show that individuals solve environmental problems by using cognitive strategies that are situation-specific (Stamm & Grunig, 1977).

Alternately, those who are low in motivation to seek information are more likely to rely on readily accessible information sources. Conceptually defined as the "generalized experience" route, its components are based on readily available and accessible forms of information.

The Generalized Experience Route.

As it relates to education, this model proposes that educational opportunities enhance general diversity: Colleges offer students opportunities to socialize where they may meet others who live entirely different lifestyles than themselves. For this study, we assume that as education increases, one's exposure to a variety of people also increases.

General media usage is a component of this route to tolerance based on the amount and type of information used. At one time, researchers believed that increased diversity of mediated information offered the hope of greater tolerance through individuals' exposure to the media (Stouffer, 1955). However, the literature does not support entirely this contention. Differences have emerged by type of medium.

One component of the general media use route is consistent with research findings, derived theoretically from Gerbner's cultivation theory, which establish a relationship between viewing television programming and support for political repression (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1984; see also, Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1982). Cultivation research suggests that heavy television viewers may have perceptions of social reality that are consonant with television programming. But, framing research (e.g., Iyengar, 1991) suggests a previously unexplored explanation for a negative relationship between television exposure and tolerance. That is, if media coverage is consonant and portrayals of protests emphasize deviance, then increased exposure to general media content may decrease tolerance.

The general information route also includes amount of newspaper reading. Theories such the spiral of silence (Noelle-Neuman, 1984) would logically predict a negative relationship between amount of media use, including amount of newspaper reading, and tolerance of some nonconformist groups. Although studies have found a positive relationship between an individual's attention to books and magazines (Wilson, 1975) and his or her tolerance for others, these findings may mark the differences between exposure to specific in-depth content and a more general measure of media exposure. For this study, we specifically predict a negative relationship between amount of general newspaper reading and tolerance, although amount of tolerance may vary with environmental group.

The Specialized Information Route.

The second working explanation for tolerance may be defined as the "specialized information route," which includes focused information seeking, active information processing, and specific college experiences that lead to greater knowledge. Colleges require that students "major" or specialize in a particular subject area. Our model proposes that subject matter will have a differential influence on tolerance. Taking courses in environmental studies, for example, provides students with a core of knowledge and, presumably, as students advance in class standing, their knowledge level increases. Through this increase in knowledge, students may better understand the justifications for protest (Rodeghier, Hall & Useem, 1991); this may lead to increased tolerance, although we suggest that a number of factors may affect this relationship.

The specialized model holds that focused information seeking is positively associated with tolerance. This model builds on recent evidence that individuals' attention to specific content like public affairs correlated positively with tolerance (McLeod, et al. 1991). We suggest that beyond the effects of attention and particular content, it also may be the effect of seeking out that information that is likely to be predictive of tolerance. Previous research has not examined the relationship between what motivates ones' use of information about the environment and tolerance.

Stage Two: Information Processing Strategies.

The second stage of the model addresses the role of individuals' information processing strategies in their tolerance decisions. Although the relationship between NFC and information processing strategies has not been directly investigated, the finding establishing a relationship between NFC and tolerance suggests that how individuals process information may influence their tolerance decisions and should be taken into account in our model.

Previous research has documented the relationship between information processing strategies used for general media consumption and knowledge (Kosicki & McLeod, 1990). Three strategies have emerged as consistent dimensions: (1) reflective integration, (2) active processing, and (3) selective scanning (Kosicki, McLeod & Amor, 1986). Whereas individuals who employ a selective scanning strategy tune out information, those who actively process information spend time trying to interpret information. Individuals who use a reflective integration strategy incorporate new information into existing schemata. These general strategies have been tested in previous research on tolerance (McLeod, Guo, Huang; Rzeszut & Voakes, 1992) but have found mixed support.

Our model proposes that individuals who are more highly motivated to seek information will tend to use different information processing strategies than those who are less motivated. Where individuals who seek environmental information may be more likely to use active information processing strategies and to integrate information, those who rely on more general sources will tend to be more passive in their processing of such general information.The literature suggests that the more passive, selective scanning would negatively influence situational tolerance.

Stage Three: Knowledge.

The third stage of the model introduces knowledge as a factor bearing on tolerance decisions. Generally, the literature suggests a positive relationship between knowledge and tolerance, but the consistency of this finding may depend on the conceptualization of knowledge. McLeod et al. (1991) found that current events knowledge predicted tolerance better than civic liberties knowledge. However, as there are several dimensions of knowledge that may link to tolerance, further exploration of what types hold positive relationships is necessary. Furthermore, the role of specifically-focused topical knowledge like environmental facts has not been explored.

Our theoretical model makes contrasting predictions about the role of knowledge. We include a topic-specific measure of environmental knowledge in the generalized model as a statistical control. We do not expect those who rely on general media sources to be highly knowledgeable about environmental issues. A person is more likely to gain focused environmental knowledge from specialized sources. Accordingly, we propose that the components of the information specific route will tend to have a positive impact on tolerance. Individuals are less likely to gain specific environmental knowledge through common information sources like newspapers and television news.

To summarize, the generalized experience path includes the amount and type of media information in tolerance decisions. The model also recognizes the limitations of an individual's selective scanning strategy of processing information and so it includes knowledge as a control variable. The specialized information route incorporates individuals' information seeking behaviors and number of environmental classes. Such a predisposition to acquire information may result in more active information processing. These elements of the specific information route assert a positive influence of knowledge on tolerance.

Summary.

Overall, our study examines the relative contribution of the generalized and specialized routes on individuals' political tolerance of environmentalists. To better understand how issues of media framing in general and specific media usage may influence tolerance, we address the importance of the context in which expression occurs. What characteristics of individuals' experiences with education and media matter for political tolerance? We examine the effects of two routes that bridge educational and media experiences: a generalized path and a specialized path.

We hypothesize the following relationships:

H1) The generalized model (based on general newspaper and television usage and an active information processing strategy) will be negatively related to situational tolerance.

H2) The specialized model (based on focused media usage, classes taken in environmental studies, and environmental knowledge) will be positively related to situational tolerance.

Method

A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to undergraduate students enrolled in five different courses at a major northeastern university. Typically, student samples may be criticized on a number of criteria. In this case, however, we felt that the use of such respondents was justified because we could most effectively operationalize specialized information seeking.

Two goals guided course selection. The five courses were selected to achieve representation across levels of academic standing (freshman to seniors) and to represent general and specific experience with environmental issues. We therefore sampled students enrolled in communications, geography, and environmental sciences courses. After students were briefed on the purpose of the study, they completed a 10-15 minute questionnaire.

We operationalized the dependent variable, situational tolerance, in terms of students' responses to six different scenarios designed to assess supportive decision-making (Appendix A). The scenarios were devised to vary in terms of the environmental group portrayed, the degree of threat the activity posted to present lifestyle, and the morality and legality of the action in which the group was engaged. We chose two environmental groups with which we thought our respondents would have at least some familiarity— Earth First! and the Sierra Club. We chose Earth First! because this group receives a lot of media attention for its "ecoterrorism"; the Sierra Club, as one of the older conservationist groups, is widely recognized as a very "mainstream" environmental organization. Of our six scenarios, two depicted activities both legal and ethical; two were legal, but probably could be considered unethical; and two were illegal, but probably could be considered ethical. Students were asked to specify if they supported each of the activities described (no, it depends, yes).

We measured the generalized information model with two variables for newspaper and television, respectively (number of hours/minutes of use per day and number of days per week used). In addition, a factor analysis of the six information processing items yielded two dimensions (Appendix B). One factor captures the reflective integration and active processing strategies, accounting for 31.6 percent of variance. The other factor identifies selective scanning strategies. This factor accounted for 23.5 percent of the variance.

We operationalized the specialized information model with three major variables. First, we included items that address the individual's motivations for seeking news coverage about the environment by addressing how the individual makes use of environmental information (Appendix A). Cronbach's alpha for these five items was .84. Second, we measured knowledge based on responses to five multiple choice items which asked about common environmental concerns such as global warming. Third, we included a variable that indicates the number of classes taken in environmental studies or related topics.

We were most interested in testing the legal and ethical dimension of tolerance, given the traditional concerns of scholars who have studied tolerance. We combined the six dependent variables into scales of legal and ethical situations, legal and unethical situations, and illegal but probably ethical situation (Appendix A). We then placed the variables that comprise the two routes to tolerance in multiple regression equations predicting each of the scales. Furthermore, to clarify the findings, we also ran another set of regression equations predicting the tolerance situations when combined by group.

All of the regression equations included baseline controls. We controlled for the influence of economic and social philosophy (liberal or conservative) which has shown liberalism to be related to tolerance (e.g., McClosky & Brill, 1983). In addition, we controlled for respondent's affect toward the group by including a thermometer measure toward each of the environmental groups.

Results

Our respondents were 225 students enrolled at a major northeastern university. We selected these students to provide a breadth of academic majors. Almost as many students were communications majors (26.3%) as environmental majors (27.2%). The latter includes such major fields as wildlife biology, environmental sciences, and forestry, for example. Only seven percent identified themselves as social science majors, and fully 38 percent of the students came from other disciplines.

Students were reasonably knowledgeable about environmental issues. The overall mean was 3.87 on a five point knowledge scale. Environmental majors scored an average of 4.50 on this scale, whereas other students scored 3.64.

It was clear that a great deal of variance was obtained by the situation-specific tolerance scenarios. Appendix A provides question wording and categorization of the item for the legal and ethical dimensions of tolerance. The majority of students supported the legal and ethical situation involving Earth First! (61.2%) and involving the Sierra Club (67.2%), but their support waned across other dimensions of tolerance (Table 1). The most difficult scenarios for the students to support were the unethical but legal dimensions. Only about seven percent supported Earth First's disinformation campaign, and about 11 percent supported the telephone protest by the Sierra Club.

Students' feelings toward the two groups differed by academic major. Overall, the mean thermometer rating for the Sierra Club was 59.6 (where zero is cold and 100 is hot) and about 58 degrees for Earth First!. For environmental majors, however, the thermometer ratings were 65.1 and 58.1, respectively. For the rest of the sample, the thermometer ratings were about equivalent to the overall (Sierra: 57.4 and Earth First!: 57.9).

Students' media usage paralleled the national statistics, but differences emerged by college major. Overall, most students relied on television (44.8%) and on newspapers (18.1%) for environmental news. In sharp contrast, environmental majors did not rely on mass media as their primary source (31.7% other); as many used television (22%) as newspaper (22%) for information. The rest of the sample (non-environmental majors) relied on television (53.3%), newspaper (18.3), and magazines (15.4) for such information.

We examined the hypothesis that respondents would be more likely to be tolerant when they use specialized information rather than when they gain general information from the media. We discuss our findings by first considering tolerance of legal and ethical protests, then other dimensions of situational tolerance. We examine the contribution of each model for the entire sample, for those who are reliant on television, and for those who are reliant on newspaper. Finally, we try to explain the findings by weighing in the contribution of their academic major (as related to environmental studies).

The Contribution of Each Route.

Table 2 shows the beta coefficients and the incremental R^2 after implementing statistical controls for the general media experience path. These variables tended not to contribute to tolerance of legal and ethical environmental protest situations. Only knowledge positively predicted individuals' tolerance of legal and ethical environmental protest situations ($\beta = .17$, $p < .01$, $n = 194$).

We then tested the model's applicability to other dimensions of tolerance. The general media model also did not obtain significance for predicting tolerance of legal and unethical protests nor for predicting tolerance of illegal but ethical protests. With one exception, these null findings held up for subgroup analysis of the television and, separately, newspaper reliant. The exception points to a contrasting role played by information processing strategies as individuals rely on a particular medium. Those who were most reliant on television and who tend not to scan information selectively supported legal and unethical protest situations ($\beta = -.23$, $p < .05$, $n = 91$). Those who were most reliant on newspapers and who tended to selectively scan information supported legal and unethical protest situations ($\beta = .44$, $p < .01$, $n = 35$).

Table 3 shows the results from the regression equation testing the specialized route. Consistent with our hypothesis, focused information seeking positively predicted tolerance of legal and ethical environmental protests (β = .19, $p<.05$, n = 177). Classes and knowledge were not significant predictors, although the variables were related (r = .25, $p<.01$, n = 232).

Testing the model's applicability to other dimensions of tolerance turned up supporting evidence. Again, focused information seeking positively predicted tolerance of illegal and ethical environmental protests (β=.30, $p<.01$, n = 177). But, contrary to expectations, those who actively process information were less likely to support the illegal but ethical scenarios (β=-.15, $p<.05$, n = 177).

Subgroup analysis clarified the relationships among medium reliance, education, and information seeking. For those who are television reliant, seeking information positively predicted all three dimensions: tolerance of legal and ethical protests (β=.33, $p<.01$, n=83), tolerance of legal but unethical protests (β=.32, $p<.01$, n=83), and tolerance of illegal and ethical protests (β=.45, $p<.01$, n=83). These relationship were not significant for the newspaper reliant subgroup. Non-environmental majors who had less of a core of knowledge about environmental issues, tended to be focused information seekers for such issues,[1] whereas environmental majors tended not to engage in focused information seeking behaviors.

Two other elements in the specialized information model obtained for the range of dependent variables in the full sample. The greater the number of classes attended, the less the support for the legal and unethical protest situations (β = -.19, $p<.05$, n = 177). In addition, for the television reliant subgroup, those who engage in active information processing tended not to support tolerance of legal and unethical protest situations (β = -.33, $p<.01$, n = 83). The majority of other indicators for the specialized model are in the predicted (positive) direction, although they are not significant.

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[1] For legal and ethical situations of tolerance (β=.21,$p<.01$,n=129), for the legal and unethical dimension of tolerance (β=.29, $p<.01$, n=129), and for the illegal but ethical dimension (β= .38, $p<.01$, n=129).

To summarize, our expectation that the previous results would become stronger once medium reliance was taken into account, found mixed support. The stronger coefficients for this subsample suggest that individuals may be attempting to employ focused information gathering strategies for television.

Generally, our analysis has found evidence to support the positive relationship between specialized information usage and tolerance. However, the relative inconsistent contributions of the model among dependent variables suggested that the dimensions of situational tolerance are important.

Clarification of findings.

To clarify the findings, we ran the same equations on a reconfigured set of dependent variables. If the specialized information seeking route also predicted the tolerance situations by group, our findings would be more robust.

Of the variables comprising the generalized route, only two performed convincingly when predicting support for the Sierra Club and Earth First!. First, knowledge positively predicted support for the Sierra Club among non-environmental majors (β = .18, $p<.05$, n = 144). Second, among the television reliant, television viewing positively predicted supporting the Sierra Club (β = .23, $p<.05$, n = 90). Both findings suggest the general popularity of the Sierra Club. In contrast, supporters of Earth First! tended to be the economically and socially liberal who already felt positively toward the group.

Additional analyses found further convincing support for the specialized information route to tolerance. Those who engage in focused information seeking tended to support the Sierra Club (β = .22, $p<.01$, n = 176) and Earth First! (β = .27, $p<.01$, n = 186). These findings held for the television reliant (Sierra Club: β = .32, $p<.01$, n = 84; Earth First!: β = .48, $p<.01$, n = 88) and for non-environmental majors (Sierra Club: $\beta = .27$, $p < .01$, $n = 135$; Earth First!: $\beta = .40$, $p < .01$, $n = 138$).

Two other variables in the specialized information model obtained for the dependent variables. Consistent with expectation, the greater a non-environmental major's knowledge, the greater his or her support for the Sierra Club ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$, $n = 135$). Furthermore, among the newspaper reliant, individuals who had enrolled in many classes tended to support Earth First! ($\beta = .41$, $p < .05$, $n = 31$). Otherwise, individuals who tended to be socially liberal or who felt positively toward the groups, tended to support their protest actions.

The fact that the media indicators outweigh the performance of the educational specific variable (classes), suggests support for the complementary roles of educational and media in the socialization of tolerance. To establish this link to education and to provide a better explanation for our findings, we turn to a post-hoc analysis by educational major.

Explaining the findings.

We again divided the sample into two groups: students with environmentally-related majors and non-environmentally related majors. We coded respondents' answers to open-ended items which asked them to explain their reasoning for answering as they did to the tolerance items. We coded responses along six mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories: (1) use of legal principles (mentions First Amendment rights, etc.), (2) mentions consequences of the action (e.g., potential for violence, harm to others), (3) mentions group characteristics (i.e., clear concern for the group's goals, history, and associations), (4) application of moral principles (e.g., do not harm to others, do not be unfair, do not violate another's freedom), (5) use of emotions (e.g., hatred of group mentioned), and (6) other.[2]

Table 4 shows the bivariate statistics for these data by major. Environmental majors appear to be more concerned with characteristics of the group and the ethical dimension of the group's actions than non-environmental majors. In contrast, non-environmental majors tended to respond in terms of legal principles to the hypothetical situations. This finding suggests that as individuals become more specialized, they tend to consider factors other than the legal principle of protest. Said another way, it seems as if the greater the investment of knowledge in a given area, the more likely it is that individuals will give responses based on their knowledge of group characteristics or the ethics of the protest actions.

Discussion

This study offers two contributions to the tolerance literature. First, our approach has focused on situational tolerance. Second, our study has clarified the roles of specialized and generalized information on these tolerance dimensions by finding evidence to support the specification of the model. Our key findings are threefold.

First, we have established that tolerance varies across the legal and ethical dimensions. Indeed, respondents seemed least comfortable with the unethical dimensions of political protest, perhaps implicitly recognizing that all laws are not necessarily good laws.

Second, our results show that specialized information seeking augments tolerance. In the full sample, we found that those who sought information tended to support the Sierra Club and Earth First! without qualms. However, further evidence suggests that these individuals tended to support only some forms of protest: the legal and ethical actions and the illegal but probably ethical scenarios. Two subgroups—the focused information seekers who rely on television for environmental information or who are non-environmental majors—tended to fully tolerate the environmental scenarios. In contrast, the generalized model neither predicted tolerance nor explained much variance. However, among those who rely on television for environmental information, heavy television viewers tended to tolerate the Sierra Club.

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[2] We calculated intercoder reliability on a random selection of 14% of responses. We obtained Scott's pi coefficients of .89 and .76 for these items — a high level of consistency.

Information processing strategies were important factors in individuals' tolerance decisions involving the various legal and ethical actions. Individuals who engage in active processing—especially among the television reliant—were less likely to support the illegal but ethical scenarios. Those who rely on television and who do not selectively scan information tended to support the legal but unethical protests. Newspaper readers who selectively scan information also tended to support the legal but unethical protests. These findings suggest that talking with others to understand may play a role in resolving tolerance situations. However, the inconsistent results should be interpreted with caution.

Knowledge, as the third element in our model, appears to play a limited role in predicting tolerance. In contrast to previous research showing the strong role of knowledge in predicting tolerance, this variable did not predict tolerance in the expected fashion. Finding this difference from the traditional literature suggests that our approach to explaining education's role in tolerance was appropriate. That number of classes, a solid indicator of obtaining specific information through education, tended not to predict tolerance suggests that it is how and why respondents seek information that is a major contributing factor. Future research should test this with other measures of specific knowledge. Without better understanding of this concept, we believe it should remain as an element in our theoretical model.

Knowledge may play a considerable role in the critieria individuals use to reason through a tolerance situation. In tolerance situations that blur ethical and legal lines, individuals tend to rely on their core of issue-specific knowledge. Our study suggests that the greater the investment of knowledge in a given area, the more likely it is that individuals will give responses based on group characteristics or the ethics of the protest actions, rather than First Amendment principles.

The comparatively inconsistent results among the legal and ethical dimensions of tolerance suggests that, in this study, respondents reacted more strongly to group actions than they reacted to who the group was. This finding, supported by our post-hoc analysis of individuals' reasoning criteria, addresses the roles of threat and affect. Threat, as economic impact in this study, explained our findings to the extent that we asked respondents to imagine themselves in a small town whose economy centers around the timber industry. This form of economic impact was more important in responses to the Earth First! actions, than the less immediate harm posed by the threat to livestock in the Sierra Club scenarios. Again, it appears that the unethical dimension was seen by respondents as more threatening than the illegal action, suggesting that fairness plays a role in tolerance decisions. Affect, as respondents feelings toward group members, tended to play a stronger role in the ethical situations (as reactions to ethical-legal and ethical-illegal items) and the Earth First! scenarios than in others.

How does education augment tolerance through individuals' information uses? Our study suggests three conclusions. First, those who have a core of knowledge formed as environmental majors tend not to use focused information seeking behaviors. They also did not use the mass media as the primary source of information. Non-environmental majors, as those who have a more limited understanding of environmental issues, tend to be the focused information seekers. Tolerance is augmented in the latter case, but not in the former. Second, number of classes taken—as an indicator of knowledge and major—plays a role in the decision to tolerate Earth First! actions, but only among those who relied on newspapers. This suggests that these individuals combine the information gained from reading the newspaper with their environmental knowledge to facilitate tolerance of a more extreme group. Third, the seeking of specific information appears to be more important for tolerance decisions than how the information is processed. However, without evidence to support the relationship between educational attainment and preferred style of information processing, we state this conclusion cautiously.

Our findings have implications for social protests. Certain forms of environmental protests, perhaps those which may be unethical, may boomerang and encourage respondents not to support the action. An unintended boomerang effect may be especially likely given the tendency toward negative media coverage of such protests.

Finally, our findings suggest further research. The variability in agreement among the environmental situations suggests that the media's framing of protests matter for tolerance. Our scenarios were fictitious only to the point of modified versions of real protest strategies. Future research should explore the short-term impact of actual media frames, including the legal and ethical dimensions, on subjects' tolerance.

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Table 3: Hierarchical Regression Predicting Tolerance of Environmental Protest
Entire Sample

	Legal & Ethical	Legal & Unethical	Illegal & Ethical
Political Variables			
Ideology (Econ.)	.11	-.10	-.06
Ideology (Social)	-.18	-.05	-.23**
Group Affect			
Sierra Club	.14	.04	.09
Earth First!	.03	-.02	.02
Incremental R2	.077	.023	.140
F Statistic	3.64**	1.56 n.s.	6.99**
Specialized Information			
Information seeking	.19*	.15	.30**
Active Processor	.06	-.12	-.15*
Classes	.06	-.19*	-.05
Knowledge	.07	.02	.00
R2	.149	.074	.212
F Statistic	3.72**	1.71 n.s.	5.66***
n =	177	177	177

* p <.05; **p <.01

Table 4: Open-ended responses to tolerance items
Summed across three responses
(Each cell has an implicit comparison to
mentioning anything else)

	Principles	Consequences	Group	Moral	Emotions
Earth First!	23.7%	6.8%	15.9%	21.1%	1.3%
Sierra Club	24.1%	11.2%	8.6%	25.0%	1.3%
Environmental Majors Only					
	Principles	Consequences	Group	Moral	Emotions
Earth First!	20.6%	7.9%	31.7%	25.4%	0.0%
Sierra Club	23.8%	11.1%	20.6%	30.2%	0.0%
Non-environmental majors					
	Principles	Consequences	Group	Moral	Emotions
Earth First!	24.9%	6.5%	10.2%	19.5%	1.8%
Sierra Club	24.3%	11.2%	4.1%	23.1%	1.8%

Appendix A

Question wording

Situational Tolerance.

I. For each of these scenarios, imagine that you live in a small town whose economy has been centered for generations around the timber industry. Congress is considering limiting logging because the local old-growth forests serve as a natural habitat for an endangered species.

Legal & Ethical.
Earth First!, an environmental group, comes to town and hands out leaflets protesting the destruction of old growth forests. Do you support the Earth First! group handing out leaflets?

Legal & Unethical.
Members of Earth First! distribute a press release based on scientific findings they know are flawed, but support their position. Do you support the Earth First! group engaging in this disinformation campaign?

Illegal & Ethical.
Members of Earth First! chain themselves to trees on private land to prevent the trees from being cut down. Do you support the Earth First! group chaining themselves to trees?

II. Now suppose you live in a ranching town immediately adjacent to a national park. Congress is considering legislation that would allow wolves to be reintroduced into the park so that the natural ecosystem is recreated. Local ranchers are concerned the wolves might attack their livestock.

Legal & Ethical.
Members of the Sierra Club come to town and circulate a petition in support of the reintroduction of the wolves. Do you support the Sierra Club circulating a petition?

Legal & Unethical.
Members of the Sierra Club repeatedly call the 800 number of a local anti-wolf group; this ties up the line and costs the opposition group money for each call made. Do you support the Sierra Club protesting by calling the 800 number?

Illegal & Ethical.
During a meeting of the local anti-wolf group, members of the Sierra Club stage a sit-in blocking the entrance to the rancher's property. Do you support the Sierra Club staging this sit-in?

Information seeking.
Now, consider the amount of news coverage about the environment and the way you make use of that information. On a scale of one to ten where one means APPLIES NOT AT ALL and ten means APPLIES A GREAT DEAL, please tell me the extent to which each statement applies to you.

a. I try to find information that assures me about the ongoing safety of the environment.

b. I search information to find out more about those who violate environmental laws.

c. I pay attention to news about the environment in order to better understand environmental conflict.

d. I skim environmental information, because I've already heard enough.

e. I pay attention to environmental news in order to have something to talk about with others.

f. I search for environmental information to find out where politicians stand on the issue.

Information-processing strategies.
Now we are interested in the ways you use the news media. By news media, we mean newspapers, television news, news and opinion magazines, radio news, and so forth. For each statement, please tell us whether you STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, FEEL NEUTRAL, DISAGREE, or STRONGLY DISAGREE.

a. I find it necessary to read between the lines of a story to figure out what's really going on.

b. When listening to the TV news, I hear a word of a topic and then pay attention to the story

c. I talk with my friends about stories I've learned about in the news to see what they think.

d. When I'm using the news media, I try to figure out what the real story is that they're not telling me.

e. I try to find out additional information about a topic when I feel the news stories are incomplete.

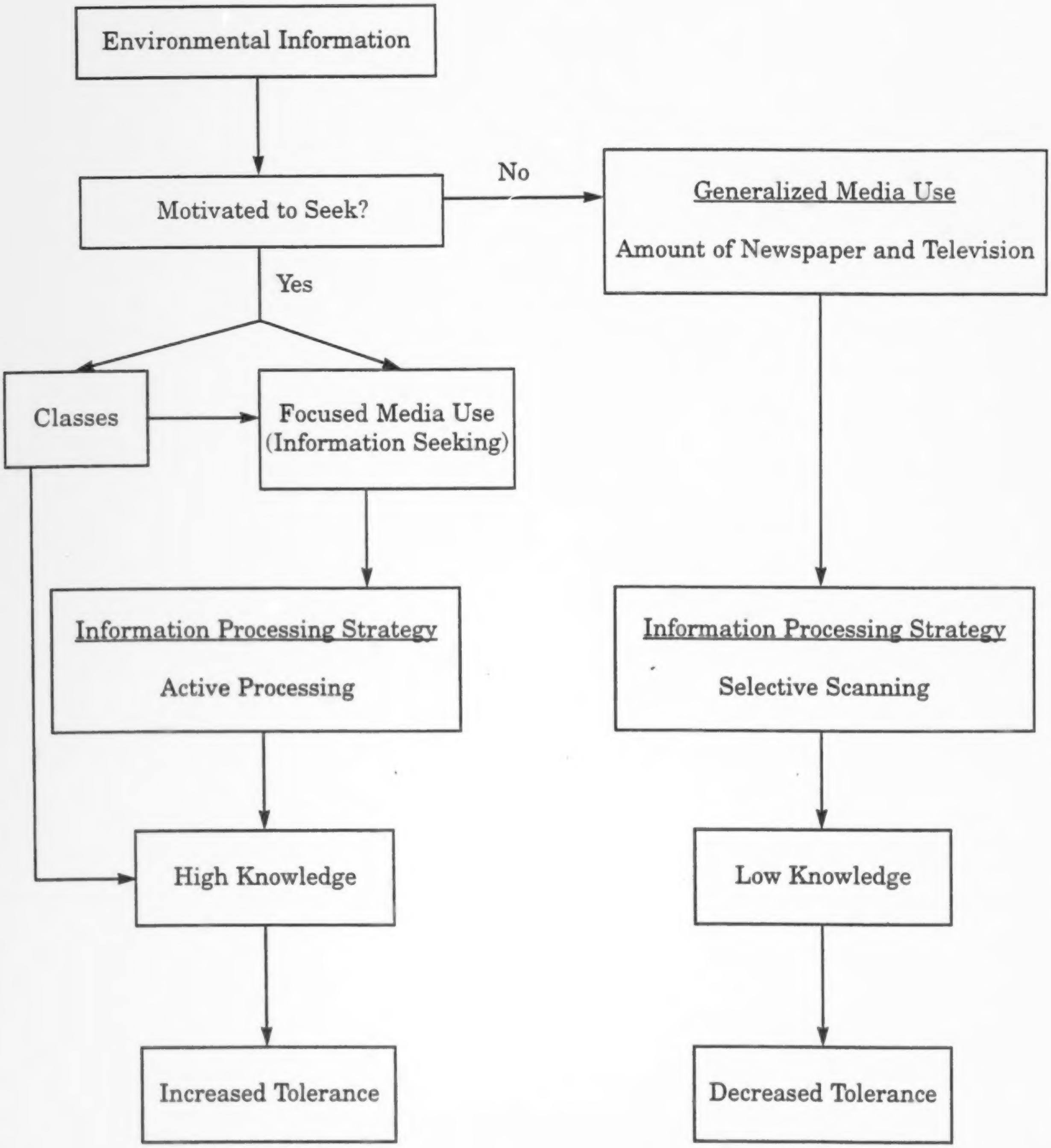
f. When reading a newspaper, I flip through and only read stories when a headline or photo catches my eye.

Appendix B

Factor Analysis of Information Processing Strategy Items

	Factor 1 **Active Processing**	Factor 2 **Selective Scanning**
I find it necessary to read between the lines of a story to figure out what's really going on.	**.79**	-.05
I talk with my friends about stories I've learned about in the news to see what they think.	**.78**	.00
When I'm using the news media, I try to figure out what the real story is that they're not telling me.	**.57**	-.35
I try to find out additional information about a topic when I feel the news stories are incomplete.	**.51**	.15
When reading a newspaper, I flip through and only read stories when a headline or photo catches my eye.	-.00	**.80**
When listening to the TV news, I hear a word of a topic and then pay attention to the story	.21	**.78**
Eigenvalue	1.89	1.41
Percent of Variance	31.6	23.5

Theoretical Model of Information Routes to Political Tolerance


Environmental Information
Motivated to Seek?
No
Yes
Generalized Media Use
Amount of Newspaper and Television
Classes
Focused Media Use (Information Seeking)
Information Processing Strategy
Active Processing
Information Processing Strategy
Selective Scanning
High Knowledge
Low Knowledge
Increased Tolerance
Decreased Tolerance

Wilson, W. C. (1975). Belief in freedom of speech and press. Journal of Social Issues, 31, 69-76.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1a: Percentages of Tolerance toward Environmental Protest (Decision-making) Entire Sample

	Earth First!			Sierra Club		
	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical
Yes (Support for freedom)	61.2	6.9	19.0	67.2	11.6	16.4
It Depends	27.6	15.9	27.6	19.4	20.3	23.7
No (Not support)	10.8	76.9	52.6	11.2	65.9	57.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 1b: Percentages of Tolerance toward Environmental Protest (Decision-making) Environmental Majors

	Earth First!			Sierra Club		
	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical
Yes (Support for freedom)	76.2	7.9	19.0	77.2	9.5	11.1
It Depends	22.2	7.9	31.7	15.9	15.9	28.6
No (Not support)	1.6	84.1	49.2	6.3	74.6	60.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 1c: Percentages of Tolerance toward Environmental Protest (Decision-making) Non-Environmental Majors

	Earth First!			Sierra Club		
	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical	Legal Ethical	Legal Unethical	Illegal Ethical
Yes (Support for freedom)	55.6	6.5	18.9	63.3	12.4	18.3
It Depends	29.6	18.9	26.0	20.7	21.9	21.9
No (Not support)	14.2	74.0	53.8	13.0	62.7	56.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression Predicting Tolerance of Environmental Protest Entire Sample

	Legal & Ethical	Legal & Unethical	Illegal & Ethical
Political Variables			
Ideology (Econ.)	.03	-.11	-.11
Ideology (Social)	-.38*	-.03	-.24**
Group Affect			
Sierra Club	.17*	.03	.08
Earth First!	.05	.00	.06
Incremental R2	.206	.022	.136
F Statistic	12.25**	1.11 n.s.	7.44**
General Media Experience			
Newspaper Use	-.02	.00	-.00
Television Use	.05	.03	.01
Selective Scan	-.02	.01	.00
Knowledge	.17**	-.04	.00
R2	.236	.026	.136
F Statistic	7.13**	.623 n.s.	3.64**
n =	194	194	194

* p <.05; **p <.01

First Ladies: A Look at Coverage in Two Major Newspapers

by

Erica Scharrer
and
Jacqueline Arnold

graduate students at the S.I. Newhouse School of
Public Communications
Syracuse University

AUTHOR INFORMATION

addresses:

Erica Scharrer (doctoral student)
1009 Madison Street #4
Syracuse, New York 13210
*contact author

Jackie Arnold (master's student)
835 Salina Street
Syracuse, New York 13208

telephone numbers:

Erica Scharrer
(315) 479-6654 (home)
(315) 443-2370 (school)

Jackie Arnold
(315) 426-0502 (home)
(315) 470-2166 (work)

e-mail addresses:

Erica Scharrer
elscharr@mailbox.syr.edu

Jackie Arnold
JacqA@aol.com

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ABSTRACT

The content analysis of a systematic sample of stories from the New York Times and Washington Post involving Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton shows the more a First Lady is involved in hard issues, the more likely she will receive negative coverage and the more prominent coverage will be. This study is a ground-breaking empirical investigation of the relationship between the role the First Lady takes on and the subsequent tone of media attention she receives.

First Ladies: A Look at Coverage in Two Major Newspapers

Introduction and Theory

First Ladies can strongly influence the leadership of the United States, both behind closed doors and within the glare of the public spotlight. Their influences have been heard in the whispers of Nancy Reagan and in the protests of Eleanor Roosevelt, a champion of civil rights. Although 60 percent of American families now include two wage earners, and women have achieved higher status in the work force, Americans "are still ambivalent about a First Lady with too much clout" (Mower, 1992). "The Presidency is an `I': Americans do not expect to elect a couple to run the government," says Paul Costello, a former press spokesman for Rosalyn Carter and Kitty Dukakis (Mower, 1992). As a result, some voices in the public are skeptical of a First Lady who oversteps her "wifely bounds." (Beasley, 1988).

Yet, inarguably, the role of the First Lady has broadened. More than any other First Lady before her, Hillary Rodham Clinton has again raised the debate about how much power a First Lady should wield. In less than two years, she has moved the role of First Lady from baking cookies into high-powered decision-making. Because her activism is unprecedented, the media seem to have taken a keen interest in her newfound position. Is the media scrutinizing her more because of this? Is she being punished by negative media coverage for tackling "hard" issues, rather than traditional pursuits such as fashion or White House decor? Has the focus on hard issues put her in a more prominent position within the media? How does her coverage compare to Nancy Reagan, another First Lady accused of having too much influence on her husband?

This is an area of particular concern because of the power of the media in shaping public opinion about political leaders. Negative news coverage may lead to negative opinions about the First Lady and, perhaps, the President. If news coverage is particularly prominent, the impact on the news audience can be greater. This can lead to the effects of "priming," in which political leaders, or even First Ladies, may be judged within the context of the issues presented in the media (Krosnick & Kinder, 1990).

Despite these potential consequences, there is a dearth of media studies regarding First Ladies. Of the studies that exist, most are qualitative in nature and provide only descriptive information. Until the 1980s, most research was limited to biographies, anecdotes and personal impressions of individual First Ladies, with little information derived from primary source material, such as actual White House files (Gould, 1990). For the most part, skepticism prevailed about the cost and necessity of such scholarly pursuits, particularly because they focused on women who were neither elected nor paid.

In the 1980s, interest grew as a result of a "First Ladies" convention in April 1984 at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan. More significantly, presidential libraries began opening up their records on First Ladies, revealing a treasure trove of letters and other documents on the intimate details of their lives (Gould, 1990). Lewis L. Gould, a history professor and First Ladies scholar, pointed out the significance of such research:

> By ignoring First Ladies, we have truncated the humanity of presidents and diminished them as men. Our grasp of the presidency is poorer for that action. But we also have, and this is more important, downgraded a group of women who have fulfilled a unique responsibility. It is too simple to say that their role has been symbolic. It has been widely said that we live by symbols. How we view the First Lady is how we expect women to act, marriages to work, families to grow, and Americans to live. In the most profound sense, the study of First Ladies holds up a mirror to ourselves (Gould, 1985).

Despite progress, Gould believes the "serious study of First Ladies is in no danger of running out of fruitful topics" (Gould, 1990). Aside from delving into the details of each First Lady, painting a more complete and intricate picture of their personalities and political roles, the research has documented historical continuities of these women, such as their penchant for White House redecorating and their inclination to adopt causes. It looks at ways in which First Ladies have affected their husbands, examining those influences in the context of presidential performance. In another arena, the rising influence and prestige of the American First Lady has stimulated comparative studies be-

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tween her and presidential wives from other nations (Hoxie, 1990).

From what can be determined, however, none of these studies has taken a systematic look at how the media portrays First Ladies, other than to refer to news accounts in general, sweeping terms. In Betty Boyd Caroli's First Ladies (1987), for example, the author "recognizes the impact of the media in defining the parameters of the First Lady's position, bounded by the contours of a marriage" (Beasley, 1988). She notes that interest in presidents' wives, including the term "First Lady," evolved after the Civil War, when women journalists found a lucrative "beat" in covering First Ladies, a territory in which male reporters showed little interest. Finally, she discusses how the media have turned publicity for First Ladies into a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Caroli explains, the media have given the First Lady access to a national audience, expanding her power and influence as a communicator. On the other hand, if a First Lady becomes too involved in political decisions, she is quickly accused in the media of "overstepping her wifely bounds" (Beasley, 1988).

In his article, "Nancy Reagan: China Doll or Dragon Lady?" (1990), James G. Benze Jr. takes this concept one step further by focusing specifically on former First Lady Nancy Reagan, whose eight years in office were marked by repeated controversies and an avalanche of media attention. Initially, when she first came to the White House, Nancy was praised for bringing "style and elegance" to Washington, particularly in comparison to the "perceived austerity of the Carter years" (Benze, 1990). Later, however, a "virtual onslaught" of criticism began. Nancy was criticized for wearing designer clothes, keeping an entourage of hairdressers, accepting $209,000 worth of exclusive ivory china and raising $800,000 in private donations to refurbish the White House -- money that was largely tax deductible. In December 1981, a Gallup poll cited by Newsweek showed nearly two-thirds of all Americans believed she overemphasized style at a time of economic hardship (Newsweek, 1981). Later, during her second term in the White House, the criticism intensified, as many accused Nancy of dominating her husband, particularly in the hiring and firing of personnel.

Benze, who noted a similar pattern among other First Ladies, makes the following conclusion:

> First Ladies are often caught in a dilemma that seems rooted in the ambiguity faced by modern American women who are expected to play at least two, sometimes conflicting roles in American society: mother/homemaker and worker/bread winner. We want them to be active, but we often want them relegated to "soft" issues -- those that directly affect people's lives. ...It is when we leave the area of soft issues for harder issues such as foreign policy, labor, banking and trade that the ambivalence about their roles appears.

For First Lady Hillary Clinton, whose high-profile career and history of activism reached far beyond the First Ladies before her, the ambiguity of her role quickly became a focus of media attention. On Inauguration Day, for example, the media focused on a more traditional, or "soft" issue related to First Ladies -- fashion. For Clinton, the issue of "the hat" marked her first media controversy at the White House. As Anne-Marie Schiro wrote in the Jan. 22, 1993, issue of The New York Times:

> Pity Hillary Clinton. A woman who never put fashion high on her list of priorities is being criticized left and right for what she has been wearing for the inaugural festivities this week. The main target: the hat. A blue velour number with a turned-back brim that some say made her look like a chipmunk. People kept wondering why she didn't at least take it off when she removed her matching coat... (Schiro 1993).

Within a month, however, Hillary Clinton's key involvement in a far more substantive issue -- health care -- again turned the media spotlight in her direction. When Clinton was appointed to lead a national health care reform task force, lawmakers questioned whether it was appropriate to give the First Lady such unprecedented authority over a crucial and complicated domestic policy issue. As U.S. Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, asked: "At this junction, there is some speculation, you know, should it be his wife?" (Priest, 1993). Later, after Hillary Clinton's health care proposal received sharp criticism and was ultimately defeated, the media latched on to another controversy -- Whitewater. In this case, the media's obsession with Hillary Clinton's role in the real estate venture, as well as her questionable, $100,000 profit from an investment in cattle futures, resulted in what political scientist Larry Sabato would refer to as a media "feeding frenzy" (Sabato, 1991).

Our study expands on the above research and breaks new ground by taking a systematic look at media portrayals of Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton during their first two years in office. Drawing on a content analysis of articles from the The New York Times and The Washington Post, we examined both the tone and placement of stories to determine if the First Ladies received more favorable coverage by focusing on "soft" rather than "hard" issues. We also examined the articles to see if "hard" issues, as well as articles that were negative in tone, received a more prominent spot in the newspapers, such as front-page coverage or a space inside the Sunday sections, which are generally the most read. Finally, we examined the sample to see if the tone of the coverage changed when either Hillary Clinton or Nancy Reagan were the primary actors in the story, rather than secondary actors. In most cases, we addressed these issues by examining the sample as a whole, then splitting the articles to draw comparisons between Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton.

A review of the literature led us to have certain expectations about the issues we examined. From Benze's article and Caroli's work, we expected the First Ladies to draw the most negative coverage when they "overstepped their wifely bounds" and focused on "hard" issues, rather than soft ones. Also, drawing on Doris Graber's descriptions of news criteria, which includes "conflict," "scandal" and "impact," we expected the articles that were more negative in tone to be more prominently displayed (Graber, 1993). From the literature, as well as our own knowledge of the First Ladies, we expected Hillary Clinton to have more negative news coverage, particularly because of her immediate role in health care and the subsequent Whitewater controversy. Finally, we expected stories in which the First Lady was the primary actor to be less neutral, if only because reporters would probably be less inclined to apply evaluative statements to the First Lady if she was not the focus of the piece.

Here are the specific hypotheses we tested:

H1: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more negative the media coverage.

H2: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more prominent the coverage will be.

H3: The more negative the story, the more prominently it will be displayed.

H4: The greater the role of the First Lady in the story, the more likely the story will **not** be neutral.

H5: Hillary Clinton will be more involved in hard/controversial issues than Nancy Reagan.

H6: Stories about Hillary Clinton are more likely to be negative than stories about Nancy Reagan.

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Methods

Trained coders conducted a content analysis of The New York Times and The Washington Post using stories from the first two years of office for Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton. The time frame was selected as a way of drawing an objective means of comparison between the two First Ladies, regardless of when specific topics were in the news. Moreover, any estimate of negative stories during this time frame is particularly profound given the traditionally-viewed nature of the time period as a "honeymoon" of sorts, in which the press is allegedly more lenient with the President, and therefore, perhaps, with his wife.

Furthermore, only stories that had the First Lady's name in the lead were used. In narrowing the scope of the sample in this way, we were able to focus solely on stories in which the role of the First Lady was prominent enough to warrant the appearance of her name in the lead. The lead was automatically defined by the Lexis/Nexis database from which our sample was extracted, and appeared to be quite liberal, with some stories having the First Lady's name first appear three to four paragraphs within the story.

From the population of all possible stories for each woman in each publication (N=1,818), every fifth story was systematically selected to reach the ultimate sample size of 285 stories, 103 of which were about Nancy Reagan and 182 of which focused on Hillary Clinton. A random starting point within each publication for each First Lady was selected by the toss of a dice. The numbers of stories for each First Lady were weighted according to the amount of coverage each woman received during each time period. Specifically, 642 stories in the two newspapers had Nancy Reagan in the lead during this time frame, while 1,176 stories involved Hillary Reagan under the same specifications.

A codebook was designed by both coders to operationalize variables and facilitate valid and reliable coding. Stories were first given an identification number. They were then coded for date and the medium in which they were placed (The New York Times or The Washington Post). The next code addressed placement within the publication, with the mutually exclusive categories of front-page Sunday edition, front-page daily edition, inside-page Sunday edition and inside-page daily edition. These were placed in ascending order of conventional journalistic importance, with the front-page Sunday slot being most prominent. Coders then noted whether the story was an editorial or non-editorial.

The stories were also coded for length, using the following intervals: 0 to 500 words, 501 to 1,000 words, 1,001 to 1,500 words, 1,501 to 2,000 words, and more than 2,000 words. The coders then judged the tone of the story along the traditional Likert scale, with "very negative" having a value of "1," and "very positive" having a value of "5." The middle score of "3" was labeled as "neutral/mixed." The neutral category included stories that did not contain evaluative statements, or interpretive phrases that could be construed as positive or negative. It also included stories that included approximately equal amounts of negative and positive commentary. During a pilot study, coders determined that even if the subject of the story was negative, such as Whitewater, the tone of the story was to be judged based on the way the First Lady was treated in the story.

The subject of the stories was also coded into categories of "soft" or "hard" issues. Soft issues were defined as those that did not involve policy making or platform issues. Specific topics included fashion, personal life, family issues, background and biographical information, charity, public service, performance/approval, decor and decorating, and other issues. If the story was a "hard" issue, it involved substantive policy areas and was coded accordingly. Topics included health care issues, drug- or crime-related stories, education, the economy, Whitewater and other hard issues. Another variable was the prominence of the First Lady within the story. This was coded as either "principal actor" or "secondary or minor" actor. Originally, the sample included stories in which a "passing reference was made to the First Lady. However, it was decided that these samples would be thrown out, as no solid conclusions can be based on fleeting and often irrelevant comments such as these references. Finally, the story was coded for visuals used in the coverage, with categories in descending order of importance, beginning with "photo of First Lady," "other photo," "graphics" and "text only."

A pilot test was conducted using the codebook and 10 percent of the sample size. Intercoder reliability was 95.3

percent using Holsti's formula. The sample was then coded and data was entered into a data file using the SPSS 4.0 (Statistical Procedures for Social Science version 4.0). Data analysis was performed using the same program. The final score for intercoder reliability according to Holsti's formula for the entire sample was 96.4 percent using just under 10 percent of the sample (N=26).

Results

Of the 285 news stories in the sample, 103 were about Nancy Reagan and 182 were about Hillary Clinton. This calculated to 36.1 percent of the sample applying to Nancy Reagan and 63.9 percent of the sample applying to Hillary Clinton (see Table 5). On average, the length of the stories fell within 501 to 1,000 words. The average tone of the story on a 1-to-5 scale, with "1" being very negative and "5" being very positive, was 3.144. The standard deviation of this figure was 0.803.

Most stories in the sample were found in the inside pages of a daily edition (74 percent), with only 12.3 percent appearing on the front page of either the daily edition or the Sunday newspaper. The vast majority of the stories were not editorials (89.1 percent), and most fell within the 501- to 1,000-word category (30.9 percent). Only 7.8 percent of the stories in the sample were 1,500 words or more, and, within this group, many of the articles were only partially about the First Lady (see Table 1).

In slightly more than half the stories, the First Lady was addressed as a secondary, or minor, actor (56.8 percent). This compared with 43.2 percent of the stories in which she was the main focus of the news coverage. A large share of the articles only contained text (41.4 percent), while a substantial number had a photograph that depicted the First Lady (22.8 percent) or another photograph that did not depict her (31.9 percent). Finally, the majority of the stories covered "soft" issues (57.2 percent), with subjects such as performance, approval, public appearances, fashion, personal life and family occurring the most often. Of the 42.8 percent of the stories that were about "hard" issues, health care (16.5 percent) and Whitewater (11.9 percent) received the most coverage (see Table 1).

To test our hypotheses, we first set out to determine whether one of the sources from which we drew our sample was more likely to have negative or positive coverage of the First Ladies. A crosstabulation of stories in The New York Times and The Washington Post with the tone of the stories shows that both newspapers were almost exactly alike in the numbers of stories that were coded as negative, neutral or positive (see Table 2). Therefore, we may make generalizations based on the newspaper coverage without having to break the sample down according to each newspaper for each

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hypothesis test. This finding also adds to the reliability of our results, supporting the assertion that major American newspapers usually do not vary dramatically in their tone of coverage for specific people or events.

Hypothesis Tests

Our data analysis supports the first hypothesis, showing that hard issues related to First Ladies were significantly more likely to get negative coverage than soft. Statistical analyses were conducted using both First Ladies collectively, then using each First Lady separately to facilitate comparisons between the two. When crosstabulating the specific subject of each news story with the tone of coverage, most of the stories were neutral. However, of the stories that were **not** neutral, the soft issues were more likely to be positive, and the hard issues were more likely to be negative. To further illustrate this point, it is helpful to collapse the tone of stories into more general categories of "negative" and "positive." For instance, 0.7 percent of the sample was about personality and character and was negative; whereas 1.8 percent of the sample was about personality and character and was positive. Under the heading of hard issues, 0.703 percent of the sample concerned Whitewater and was positive; whereas 3.203 percent of the sample concerned Whitewater and was negative. When comparing subject of the story and tone, the results were statistically significant (see Table 3).

To further illuminate this finding, we collapsed the specific subjects of stories into more general categories of "soft" or "hard," then ran a crosstabulation with these new categories and tone of the coverage. Again, the finding is statistically significant and shows that soft issues are substantially more likely to be positive **when they are not neutral**, while hard issues have a greater chance of being negative when they are not neutral. Of the soft issues addressed in the sample, 8.1 percent were negative and 20.0 percent were positive (see Table 4).

When we break down the stories according to which First Lady is addressed, the results generally hold, but are less significant. For Nancy Reagan, stories that dealt with soft issues received more positive coverage than negative coverage (27.2 percent positive compared with 9.7 percent negative). However, none of the hard issues that involved Nancy Reagan received negative coverage. Instead, 3.9 percent of the hard issues involving Nancy Reagan received positive coverage. Thus, in the specific case of Nancy Reagan, the hypothesis was not fully supported, and the results were not statistically significant.

On the other hand, in the specific case of Hillary Clinton, the hypothesis is clearly and significantly supported. Of the news articles regarding soft issues about this First Lady, only 7.1 percent were negative, compared with over twice as many, 15.9 percent, that were positive. Of the hard news issues involving Hillary Clinton, a full 12.6 percent received negative coverage, compared with 7.1 percent that received positive coverage. In this instance, the results were statistically significant (see Table 6).

The second hypothesis was supported by the data as well. A crosstabulation of the subject category by the placement of the story within the publication showed that hard issues were indeed more likely to receive more prominent coverage than soft issues. A full 46.7 percent of the sample represented soft issues displayed in the least-prominent section of the newspapers: the inside pages of the daily editions. At the same time, soft issues rarely made it to the position of most prominence: the front page of the Sunday newspaper (1.4 percent of the sample). Another 1.4 percent of the "soft issues" landed on the front pages of the daily newspapers. Within the category of hard issues, 8.4 percent of the sample was found on the front pages of the daily editions, compared with 27.4 percent on the inside pages of the daily editions. Overall, the findings regarding Hypotheses 2 show a statistically significant relationship between the category of the issue at stake (hard or soft) and the placement of the coverage (see Table 7). However, it can also be seen that only a small portion of stories concerning the Front Lady made it to the front page at all.

To measure the variable "prominence," we attempted to compute an index based on the coded variables for length of story, placement within the newspaper (discussed above), presence or absence of visuals, and the role of the First Lady within the story (whether she was primary or secondary actor). However, it was not statistically sound to build such an index (Cronbach's alpha for the reliability coefficient = 0.2107) even if one or more of the variables were dropped out of the scale. Therefore, estimations of prominence are defined using the variable with the highest amount of face validity for measuring prominence, which is the placement within the newspaper. All data analyses measuring prominence, therefore, are based solely on the placement of the article.

The next hypotheses tested in the data analysis was the assumption that negative stories, regardless of subject, would be more prominent than positive stories. Although the basic anticipated relationship was found, the results for Hypothesis 3 were not statistically significant. Of the stories receiving the most prominent placement, front-page Sunday, 0.1 percent of the sample was negative, while none of the stories in this location was positive. Of the stories receiving the second-most prominent placement, front-page daily, 1.4 percent of the sample was negative, compared with 0.14 percent that was positive. However, in the areas that are less prominent, and therefore deemed less prominent by the gatekeepers within the media organizations, there are more positive stories than negative. Specifically, of those stories appearing on the inside pages of the Sunday newspapers, 3.2 percent are negative and 4.3 percent are positive. In the inside pages of the daily newspaper, 10.3 percent of the stories are negative and 20.7 percent are positive. Again, however, the relationships mentioned here are not statistically significant (see Table 8).

The results for Hypothesis 3 hold constant and remain insignificant when the stories are broken down according to First Lady. Although they appear to support the general premise of the hypothesis, in the case of both Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton, the differences in placement between negative stories and positive stories are not statistically significant (see Table 9).

Further results show support for Hypothesis 4, supporting the assertion that the greater the role of the First Lady within the article, the greater the likelihood the story will **not** be neutral. Instead, it will either be positive or negative. Only 15.1 percent of the sample involved stories that focused on the First Lady as the main character and were neutral or mixed. On the other hand, 42.8 percent of the stories featured the First Lady as a secondary or minor character and were neutral or mixed. The hypothesis was statistically significant at the $p<0.05$ level (see Table 10).

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Based merely on conventional wisdom and the seemingly inflated amount of negative opinions about Hillary Clinton, it was hypothesized that she would be involved in a greater number of hard/controversial issues than Nancy Reagan. A simple descriptive statistic demonstrated that this does seem to be the case. Within the 103 stories about Nancy Reagan, 79.6 percent were about soft issues, and 20.4 percent were about hard issues. However, of the stories that involved Hillary Clinton, 44.5 percent were about soft issues, compared with 55.5 percent that were hard or controversial (see Table 11).

Finally, we set out to test the widely-held belief that Hillary Clinton has received a great deal of negative coverage. Hypothesis 6 stated that stories about Hillary Clinton will more likely be negative than stories about Nancy Reagan. This hypothesis was supported, and the relationship between the variables was statistically significant. In fact, of those stories about Nancy Reagan, 9.7 percent were negative and 31.1 percent were positive. Apparently, Hillary Clinton received harsher treatment, with 19.8 percent of her stories being negative and almost as many, 23.1 percent, being positive.

Discussion

After years of neglect, political science scholars have started to take a closer look at the role of First

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Ladies because of the important part they play in influencing their husbands, participating in government and serving as a national symbol. As two scholars have pointed out, First Ladies often find their task difficult because they were not "elected" and have no clearly defined constitutional role. This puts them in the "paradoxical situation" of being expected to advise their husbands, yet not to become *too* involved in government. (Benze, 1990; Beasley, 1988.)

In reviewing the larger body of literature, we found that First Ladies have largely been neglected when it comes to scientific evaluations in one major arena: the media. Most studies have focused on media approaches to political candidates or political parties -- people who are *elected* to office. (Patterson, 1994) This focus has extended to comparative media studies of political candidates and political parties in other countries, such as Great Britain and Germany. (Semetko et. al., 1991; Semetko and Shoenbach, 1994) Other studies have focused on the power of the media in influencing the relationship between politics and public opinion, exploring concepts such as "agenda setting" and "priming." (Iyengar, Peters & Kinder, 1982; Krosnick & Kinder, 1986) These studies, however, have not been applied specifically to First Ladies.

As with political leaders, most people do not have personal contact with First Ladies. Therefore, they rely in large part on the media in forming opinions about her performance and her role in government. With the activism of former First Ladies coming to light -- and their obvious involvement in government today -- the "non-elected" status of their position should make little difference in evaluating the necessity of such research.

Our study attempts to fill a portion of this research gap by examining the coverage of Nancy Reagan and Hillary Rodham Clinton in two of the largest and most prestigious U.S. newspapers, The New York Times and The Washington Post. Several findings have emerged that shed light on this coverage.

First, our study revealed that both newspapers were largely neutral in tone when they addressed both First Ladies, a factor that may be attributed to the goal of objective reporting among newspaper journalists.

This neutrality applied for both "hard" issues and "soft" issues, although a slightly larger percentage of the "hard" issues were negative in tone when they were not neutral. Conversely, stories that addressed "soft" issues were far more likely to be positive in tone when they were not neutral. In only two cases -- health care and Whitewater -- did the negative stories outweigh the positive stories in the "hard" issues category.

In comparing the two First Ladies, we found it interesting that Nancy Reagan received no negative coverage when she dealt with "hard" issues. However, nearly 10 percent of the "soft" issues coverage was negative in tone, compared with more than 25 percent that was positive. This makes sense in light of the fact that Nancy was initially praised for the "style and elegance" that later came back to haunt her. As stated earlier, much of the country criticized Nancy for wearing designer clothes, accepting money for White House decorations and pulling out the new, expensive china during a time of economic hardship. Perhaps this simply means that even issues that are traditionally "soft," such as fashion and White House decor, are bound to receive negative coverage when a controversy is involved.

Hillary, on the other hand, received most of her negative coverage -- 12 percent -- when she was associated with "hard" issues. By comparison, about 7 percent of her "soft" issues received negative coverage. These findings were also expected in light of her immediate involvement in health care and Whitewater, which probably left little time for anything else. Interestingly, Hillary also received more coverage overall, generating 182 stories from both newspapers compared to 103 articles for Nancy.

Second, our study showed that neither First Lady received a great deal of prominent coverage in terms of where the articles appeared in each newspaper. However, a greater share of the "hard" issues, rather than the "soft" issues, appeared on the front page -- about 10 percent of the overall sample. Of these front-page stories, most were neutral in tone, with less than 2 percent falling into the negative categories.

These findings suggest that newspapers -- at least these two in particular -- still do not give prominent front-page coverage to First Ladies, especially when they are involved in "soft" issues. When the stories do appear on the front page, they are more likely to address "hard" issues and be neutral in tone -- a fact that may bring comfort to future First Ladies.

To some degree, these findings paint a different picture than the journalistic cynicism and rise in interpretive reporting described by Thomas Patterson in his latest work, Out of Order. (Patterson, 1994) According to our findings, newspaper reporters for The New York Times and The Washington Post seemed conscientious in avoiding evaluative or interpretive comments. They also steered clear of one-sided stories, a pattern that was apparent even within the negative context of an issue such as Whitewater.

Finally, while these First Ladies predominantly received coverage that was "neutral" in tone, they were less likely to be treated neutrally if they were primary actors in the stories, rather than a secondary ones.

If a story was specifically about the First Lady, it was "neutral" in tone about 15 percent of the time, according to our study. If the First Lady was a secondary player, that "neutrality" shot up to 43 percent of the sample.

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Interestingly, nearly 20 percent of the articles that focused specifically on the First Lady were positive in tone, compared to about 9 percent that were negative. Thus, a First Lady might also take comfort in the fact that she is more likely to receive positive coverage -- rather than neutral or negative coverage -- if the story is specifically about her. Again, this would probably be limited to newspaper coverage, which generally strives to be objective.

Our study, while it does address several questions about the newspaper coverage of two First Ladies, has several limitations that should be noted here.

For starters, our sample leaves out a large body of media that includes television, radio, talk shows and magazines. Thus, our findings may not be true for "the media" as a whole. In magazines, for example, the style of writing calls for an author to have a "point of view" in his or her piece, which means those stories are more likely to be negative or positive, rather than neutral. A cursory look at the coverage in Newsweek during this same time period indicated this to be true. The public may also get its news about First Ladies from one dominant media source, such as television. If this were the case, it would be more important to examine coverage in that arena.

Our study was also limited in that it included only two first ladies -- and only applied to their first two years in office. Nancy, for example, apparently drew more coverage during her later years in office, when she became closely involved in contoversial decisions about personnel. Other researchers may drum up different results if they expand the focus of their studies to include several First Ladies over several media outlets. These researchers may also want to address the content of visuals, which leave important impressions on viewers and readers. In our study, which used the Nexis/Lexis database, we could not determine what was contained in either the visuals or graphics that accompanied stories. Therefore, we could not determine if these visuals affected the prominence or tone of the stories.

Finally, our research was also limited in that it did not address the effects of this newspaper coverage: Did it change people's views of Nancy or Hillary? Did the issues addressed in the media have a "priming effect," causing the public to judge the performances of these First Ladies in the context of those issues? (Krosnick & Kinder, 1986). For Hillary, this may have been especially significant in light her involvement in the Whitewater controversy.

In general, our findings revealed that most coverage of First Ladies in The New York Times and The Washington Post was neutral in tone, except when the story focused specifically on her. In those cases, the story was more likely to be positive. As expected, the most prominant coverage -- at least in terms of placement in the newspaper -- dealt with "hard" issues, rather than "soft" ones.

First Ladies: A Look at Coverage in Two Major Newspapers

Because of the limitations of our research, particularly its narrow focus, the future calls for further study in addressing the relationship between the media and First Ladies. In his article, "Modern First Ladies in Historical Perspective," Lewis L. Gould warns about the dangers of neglecting First Ladies (Gould, 1985):

> We will only understand the past of our presidents and ourselves most fully when we grasp it in all its richness. A history that excludes First Ladies, or the contribution and lives of women generally, will be a record that is limited, false and wrong.

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Table 1. Percentages for placement of story regarding the First Lady, type, length, tone, and subject of the story, prominence of the First Lady within the story, and presence or absence of visuals.

Variables	%
placement of story	
front page Sunday	2.5
front page daily	9.8
inside page Sunday	13.7
inside page daily	74.0
	100.00%
	(N=285)
type of story	
non-editorial	89.1
editorial	10.9
	100.00%
	(N=285)
length of story	
0 to 500 words	30.9
501 to 1000 words	73.7
1001 to 1500 words	18.6
1501 to 2000 words	3.2
2000+ words	4.6
	100.00%
	(N=285)
tone of story	
very negative	1.8
negative	14.4
neutral/mixed	57.9
positive	19.6
very positive	6.3
	100.00%
	(N=285)
prominence of the actor	
principal character	43.2
secondary/minor actor	56.8
	100.00%
	(N=285)

Table 1. cont'd.

Variables	%
visuals of story	
photo of First Lady	22.8
other photo	31.9
graphics	3.9
text only	41.4
	100.00% (N=285)
subject of story	
soft issues	
fashion	8.8
personal life/family	7.7
background/biography	0.4
charity/public service	2.8
personality/character	2.5
public appearances	9.8
performance/approval	11.9
decor	4.2
other	9.1
hard issues	
health care	16.5
drugs/crime	0.4
education	0.7
economy	1.1
Whitewater	11.9
other	12.3
	100.00% (N=285)

Table 2. Crosstabulation of the tone of the story and the medium in which it appears.

Medium	Tone (in percent)				
	very negative	negative	neutral/mixed	positive	very positive
The Washington Post	0.7	7.7	33.0	10.5	3.1
The New York Times	1.1	6.7	24.9	9.1	3.1
					100.00% (N=285)

chi square=0.97, df=4, ns
Cramer's V=0.06

Table 3. Crosstabulation of subject of the story regarding the First Lady and tone of the story.

H1: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more negative the media coverage.

Subject of story	Tone (in percent)				
	very neg.	neg.	neutral	pos.	very pos.
fashion		1.4	5.3	1.8	.003
personal/family			4.9	2.5	.003
background/biog.			.003		
charity/public service	.003		0.7	1.4	.003
personality/character		0.7		1.1	0.7
public appearance		1.1	4.6	4.2	
performance/approval		2.5	3.9	2.8	2.8
decor		1.1	2.1	1.1	
other soft issue		1.1	7.4	0.7	
health care	1.1	2.1	10.5	1.8	1.1
drugs/crime				.003	
education			.003	.003	
economy			1.1		
Whitewater	.003	3.2	7.4	0.7	.003
other hard issue		1.4	9.5	1.1	.003

100.00%
(N=285)

chi square = 102.03, df=56, $p<0.05$
Cramer's V=0.30

Table 4. Crosstabulation of "soft" and "hard" subjects by tone of the story.

H1: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more negative the media coverage.

Subject	Tone (in percent)				
	very negative	negative	neutral/mixed	positive	very positive
soft	0.4	7.7	29.1	15.4	4.6
hard	1.4	6.7	28.8	4.2	1.8
					100.00% (N=285)

chi square=18.34, df=4, p<0.05
Cramer's V=0.25

Table 5. Percentages of stories for each First Lady.

Variable	% and amount
First Lady	
Nancy Reagan	36.1 (N=103)
Hillary Clinton	63.9 (N=182)
	100.00% (N=285)

Table 6. Crosstabulation of tone of the story by category of the subject for stories regarding Nancy Reagan and Hillary Clinton.

H1: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more negative the media coverage.

Tone of Story	Category of Subject of Story		
	hard	soft	
Nancy Reagan			
very negative		1.0	
negative		8.7	
neutral/mixed	16.5	42.7	
positive	2.9	24.3	
very positive	1.0	2.9	
			100.00% (N=103)

chi square=6.33,df=4, ns
Cramer's V=0.25

Tone of Story	hard	soft	
Hillary Clinton			
very negative	2.2		
negative	10.4	7.1	
neutral/mixed	35.7	21.4	
positive	4.9	10.4	
very positive	2.2	5.5	
			100.00% (N=182)

chi square= 15.76,df=4, $p<0.05$
Cramer's V=0.29

Table 7. Crosstabulation of category of subject by placement of story.

H2: The more a First Lady gets involved in hard/controversial issues, the more prominent the coverage will be.

Placement of Story (in percentages)

Category of Subject of Story	front page Sunday	front page daily	inside page Sunday	inside page daily
soft issues	1.4	1.4	7.7	46.7
hard issues	1.1	8.4	6.0	27.4
				100.00% (N=285)

chi square=24.0,df=3, $p<0.05$
Cramer's V=0.29

Table 8. Crosstabulation of placement of story regarding the First Lady by tone of the story.

H3: The more negative the story, the more prominently it will be displayed.

Placement of Story	Tone (in percent)				
	very negative	negative	netural/mixed	positive	very positive
front page Sunday		0.1	1.7		
front page daily		1.4	7.4	0.1	0.04
inside page Sunday	1.1	2.1	6.3	3.2	1.1
inside page daily	0.1	10.2	42.6	15.8	4.9
					100.00% (N=285)

chi square = 17.94, df=12, ns
Cramer's V=0.14

Table 9. Crosstabulation of placement of story by tone for each First Lady.

H3: The more negative the story, the more prominently it will be displayed.

Placement	Tone (in percent)				
	very negative	negative	neutral/mixed	positive	very positive
Nancy Reagan					
front page Sunday	0.0	1.9	2.9	0.0	0.0
front page daily	0.0	0.0	6.8	1.0	0.0
inside page Sunday	0.0	0.0	3.9	1.9	0.0
inside page daily	1.0	6.8	45.6	24.2	3.9
					100.00% (N=103)
chi square=11.53, df=12, ns Cramer's V=0.19					
Hillary Clinton					
front page Sunday	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
front page daily	0.0	2.2	7.7	0.5	0.5
inside page Sunday	1.6	2.2	7.7	3.8	1.6
inside page daily	0.5	12.1	40.7	11.0	5.5
					100.00% (N=182)
chi square=14.58, df=12, ns Cramer's V=0.16					

Table 10. Crosstabulation of prominence of First Ladies in stories by tone.

H4: The greater the role of the First Lady in the story, the more likely the story will *not* be neutral.

Actor	Tone (in percent)				
	very negative	negative	neutral/mixed	positive	very positive
principal	1.4	7.7	15.1	12.6	6.3
secondary/minor	0.4	6.7	42.8	7.0	0.0
					100.00% (N=285)

chi square=58.17, df=4, p<.05
Cramer's V=0.45

Table 11. Percentages for amount of hard and soft issues in which each First Lady was involved.

H5: Hillary Clinton will be involved in more hard/controversial stories than Nancy Reagan.

Variable	Category of Subject of Stories (in percent)		
	hard	soft	
First Lady			
Nancy Reagan	20.4	79.6	100.00% (N=103)
Hillary Clinton	55.5	44.5	100.00% (N=182)

APPENDIX A

CODE BOOK

VARIABLE	NAME	LABEL
V1	story i.d.#	nwp1...nwp450 nnyt1.... hwp1... hnyt1...
V2	date	01/01/80...
V3	medium	01=wpost 02=nyt
V4	placement	01=front page/daily 02=inside page/daily 03=front page/Sunday 04=inside page/Sunday
V5	story type	01=non-editorial 02=editorial
V6	length	01=0 to 500 words 02=501 to 1000 words 03=1001 to 1500 words 04=1501 to 2000 words 05=2001+ words
V7	tone	01=very negative 02=negative 03=neutral/mixed 04=positive 05=very positive

CODE BOOK, continued

V8	subject	soft issues: 01=fashion 02=personal life/family 03=background/biography 04=charity/public service 05=personality/character 06=public appearances 07=performance/approval 08=decor 09=other soft issues hard issues 10=health care 11=drugs/crime 12=education 13=economy 14=Whitewater 15=other hard issues
V9	actor	01=principal actor 02=secondary/minor actor 03=passing reference
V10	visuals	01=photo of First Lady 02=other photo 03=graphics 04=text only

APPENDIX B

CODE SHEET

1). __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
I.D. (V1)

2). __ __ / __ __ / __ __
DATE (V2)

3). __ __
MEDIUM (V3)

4). __ __ section ____
PLACEMENT(V4) page ____

5). __ __
STORY TYPE (V5)

6). __ __
words____
LENGTH (V6)

7). __ __
TONE (V7)

8). __ __
SUBJECT (V8)

9). __ __
ACTOR (V9)

10). __ __
VISUALS (V10)

other hard issue _________
other soft issue _________

- -

1). __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
I.D. (V1)

2). __ __ / __ __ / __ __
DATE (V2)

3). __ __
MEDIUM (V3)

4). __ __ section ____
PLACEMENT(V4) page ____

5). __ __
STORY TYPE (V5)

6). __ __
words____
LENGTH (V6)

7). __ __
TONE (V7)

8). __ __
SUBJECT (V8)

9). __ __
ACTOR (V9)

10). __ __
VISUALS (V10)

other hard issue _________
other soft issue _________

Agenda-Setting with an Ethnic-Relevant Topic: Ethnicity and Public Salience of Illegal Immigration

By

Michael B. Salwen

and

Frances R. Matera

Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Mass Communication and Society Division, Anaheim, CA, August 1996.

Michael B. Salwen is a professor in the School of Communication at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla. Frances R. Matera is an associate professor in the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunication at Arizona State University, Tempe.

Abstract

Agenda-Setting with an Ethnic-Relevant Topic: Ethnicity and Public Salience of Illegal Immigration

This study investigated the agenda-setting process regarding the issue of illegal immigration. Based on findings from a representative telephone survey of 626 adults in the Phoenix, Arizona, metropolitan area, support was found for the hypothesis that predicted differences in how respondents perceive their self-identified "most important" problem from illegal immigration. The consistency and strength of this finding underscores the importance that people attribute to their problem of singular importance. The hypothesis predicting differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding the ethnically relevant issue of illegal immigration was not supported. *Post-hoc* analyses with the issues of the economy and crime suggested possible differences between how Hispanics and non-Hispanics perceive a salient issue. Hispanics perceived greater experience and interest in the economy than non-Hispanics. But the fact that this finding did not hold with crime suggests that there are differences by issues as well as ethnicity that need to be explored.

Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Mass Communication and Society Division, Anaheim, CA, August 1996.

Agenda-Setting with an Ethnic-Relevant Topic: Ethnicity and Public Salience of Illegal Immigration

As the agenda-setting metaphor implies, the news media provide the public with a priority list of the issues, problems, people, and places that are current topics of debate and discussion. In this way, the news media cue the public to the relative importance or "salience" of the major issues of the day.

There is strong empirical support for the agenda-setting hypothesis. Researchers have reported a correspondence between the public and media issue agendas even when respondents have only passing exposure to or limited interest in the news (McLeod *et al.*, 1974; Schoenbach and Weaver, 1983; Tardy *et al.* 1981). But agenda-setting is not a simple, linear process in which increased exposure or interest automatically results in an increased correspondence between the media and public agendas. Ironically, the news media exerts its greatest agenda-setting influence among respondents who passively attend to the news. Those who actively attend to the news or issues in the news-- either because of personal experience or ego-involvement with issues-- are less likely to adopt the media's agenda than those who passively attend to the news (Blood, 1980; Tardy *et al.* 1981; Weaver *et al.* 1981; Winter, 1981; Winter *et al.*, 1982).

Demographic characteristics such as race/ethnicity could account for respondents' personal experiences or ego-involvement with certain issues that mediate the agenda-setting process (Hill, 1985). Fielder and Tipton (1986) found that minorities are less susceptible to the agenda-setting influence than Whites, presumably because they have less exposure to news media. In another study that considered demographic differences and news media use, Shaw and Martin (1992) reported that as news media use increases, agenda-setting differences by gender, race, income, and age decreases. They argued that the news media are great equalizers that contribute to issue consensus that supersedes differences among demographic groups. Iyengar and Kinder (1987, pp. 47-53) found evidence for differential agenda-setting effects by race, reporting that minorities attributed greater importance to civil rights than Whites. Wanta and Miller (1994), however, failed to find differential agenda-setting by race/ethnicity.

This study investigated the agenda-setting process with people of different ethnic groups, with a focus on an ethnic-relevant issue. Specifically, it examined whether perceptions, evaluations, and perceived experiences with the issue of illegal immigration in a Southwestern metropolitan area differed between Hispanics and non-Hispanics.

The Salience Concept

Despite the importance of the "salience" concept in agenda-setting, the concept has not been fully explicated (Edelstein, 1993). Public salience in agenda-setting is commonly measured as the individual's response to the "most important problem" question. This measure conceives of salience as "the" issue of singular importance to the individual (Geer, 1991; RePass, 1971). While the public agenda of issues is often aggregated, ranked, and correlated with the media agenda of issues, these procedures obscure the fact that for each individual only one issue is salient (McCombs, 1981).

Another design in agenda-setting has respondents evaluate problems from a list (Chaffee and Izcaray, 1975; Rubin and Perse, 1994; Salwen, 1988). Although this design transforms the salience concept from "singular salience" of an issue to "relative salience" among issues, none of which might be of singular importance to the individual, it permits researchers to restrict the study to a set of comparable issues selected on theoretical grounds (McCombs and Bell, forthcoming). Most of the early research focused on relationships between the media and public agendas and ignored questions involving "prediction": What makes an individual regard an issue as salient?[1]

Issue Obtrusiveness

Implicit in much of the theoretical development of agenda-setting is that in modern society people depend upon the news media to comprehend a world beyond their direct experience. Even in modern society, however, people still directly experience some issues that "obtrude" into people's lives (Funkhouser, 1973a, 1973b; Zucker, 1978). The general consensus regarding issue "obtrusiveness" is that direct experience diminishes media agenda-setting because people who have direct experience with issues are not as dependent on the media to set their issue priorities (Atwater *et al.*, 1985; Behr and Iyengar, 1985; Blood, 1980; Hugel *et al.*; Smith, 1987, 1988; Weaver *et al.* 1981; Winter, 1981; Winter *et al.*, 1982). As the authors of a large-scale presidential election study in the agenda-setting tradition concluded: "This indicates that personal experience is a more powerful teacher of issue salience than are the mass media when the issues have direct impact on voters' daily lives" (Weaver, Graber, McCombs and Eyal, 1981, p. 195).

Obtrusiveness has shown itself to be a slippery concept, with some studies testing for obtrusiveness and others assuming obtrusiveness based on issue characteristics. As a result, different studies label the same issue as obtrusive and unobtrusive. Ader (1995), Atwater *et al.* (1985), Salwen (1988), and Eyal *et al.* (1981), in line with most research, treated environmental issues as unobtrusive while MacKuen and Coombs (1981) did not. Some studies reported evidence for agenda-setting with economic issues, thought to be the archetypical obtrusive issue (Behr and Iyengar, 1985; Erbring *et al.*, 1980; MacKuen and Coombs, 1981; Shaw and Slater, 1988). Crime has been defined as an obtrusive (Zucker, 1978) and unobtrusive (Weaver, *et al.*, 1981) issue. Further complicating the obtrusiveness contingency with crime, research indicates that even crime victims do not regard crime as a more serious problem than those who were not victims (Einsiedel *et al.*, 1984; Tyler, 1980; Kinder and Sears, 1981).

Coming from a different perspective, several scholars have argued that direct experience with issues can enhance media agenda-setting. Erbring *et al.* (1980) and Iyengar and Kinder (1987) reported that people personally affected by issues in the news were more sensitive to news about the issues and predisposed to the media's agenda-setting influence. Demers *et al.* (1989) contended that "cognitive-priming," gained from personal experience with issues, amplifies people's estimations of issue importance and thereby increases media agenda-setting. They reported no support for obtrusive contingency and some support for cognitive-priming. Lasorsa and Wanta (1990), also reporting evidence for issue obtrusiveness to enhance agenda-setting, claimed that personal experience might "resonate with, and therefore reinforce, the signals received from these other sources of information [the mass media], rather than interfere with them" (p. 806).

Researchers have relied largely on respondent self reports of physical contact with issues as measures of an issue's obtrusiveness. This may not be how individuals regard issue obtrusiveness. Respondents' involvement with issues, even absent personal experience, can leave respondents feeling the issue encroaches on their lives. Thus, obtrusiveness might be based more in respondents' perceptions of issues than experiences with issues. As Lasorsa and Wanta (1990) stated: "[W]hat is an obtrusive issue to one person may not necessarily be obtrusive to another" (p. 806).

The notion of "reference groups," developed by Hyman (1960), accounts for how people can reference themselves to a certain groups and issues associated with those groups. For example, to an American journalist, the government execution of a journalist in Southeast Asia is obtrusive even without direct experience because he or she can "feel" for the plight of fellow journalists. To a middle-class African American living in the suburbs, a police beating of an inner-city African American represents the White establishment's contempt for Blacks. To a feminist, an explicit pornographic film is an act of violence against all women. As these examples with race/ethnicity, gender, and even profession indicate, people identify with their "reference groups" in evaluating issue obtrusiveness (Becker *et al.*, 1992; Perloff, 1989; Vallone *et al.*, 1985).

As a result of the issues raised in this discussion, and the conflicting research on race/ethnicity and agenda-setting, the following hypotheses were tested:[2]

H1: There will differences in how respondents perceive their self-selected most important problem from a major social problem--in this study, illegal immigration?

H2: There will be differences by ethnicity in how respondents perceive illegal immigration?

H3: There will be differences by ethnicity in how respondents perceive their self-identified most important problem?

METHOD

A representative telephone survey of 626 adults (age 18 and older) was conducted in the greater Phoenix, Arizona, metropolitan area (population 983,403, United States Department of the Census, 1990) during weekday evenings in March 1995. Telephone numbers were randomly generated from the most recent telephone directories. The last digit of each number was randomly changed to include respondents with unlisted telephone numbers. A Spanish-language instrument was used by bilingual callers when needed. After three call-backs, the rate of completed interviews to valid contacts was 70%. The sample was 86% White, 57% female, and 23% Hispanic.[3]

After the introduction and filter question for age, each respondent was asked to identify the most important national problem: "What would you say is the most important problem currently facing the nation today?" The respondent was then asked eight questions regarding his or her experiences, evaluations, and interest with both his or her self-identified "most important problem" and the same eight questions regarding a selected problem-- illegal immigration. In this way, we used both the "most important problem" measure of "singular [issue] salience" common in agenda-setting followed by the salience of a pre-determined issue in order to contrast respondents' issues of singular salience with an issue selected on theoretical grounds. In this way, we hope to explicate characteristics that endow an issue with singular salience.

Illegal immigration was selected because it is a divisive national issue, particularly in the Mexico border states with large Mexican American populations. The issue gained national attention in November 1994 after 59% of California voters approved Proposition 187. The legislation, which was later ruled unconstitutional by a federal court, sought to deny illegal aliens basic services, including education and emergency health-care.

Three out of four Hispanics voted against "Prop 187" (Lee and Sloan, 1994). In April 1995, a poll of Arizonans reported that two-thirds would support measures to cut all but emergency services to illegals (Schaffer, 1995). There have been efforts to get an initiative similar to California's Prop 187 on the ballot in Arizona (Shaffer, 1996; Willey, 1995).

Measuring Experiences, Evaluations, and Interest

Questions ascertaining respondents experiences, evaluations, and interest (presented in random order) about their self-identified "most important problem" and illegal immigration were measured by 5-point Likert-type scales, ranging from very important (+2) to not important (-2) with a "neither important or unimportant" midpoint (coded as zero).[4] The questions, and the measure of internal reliability (Cronbach alpha coefficient) of each group of questions, were as follows:

Experience with [the Problem] (Cronbach alpha= .81)

Experience with Illegal Immigration (Cronbach alpha= .79)

1. **Affects Life**: How much does [the problem/illegal immigration] affect your life on a daily or almost daily basis?
2. **Touches Life**: How much does [the problem/illegal immigration] touch you or your family's life in some way?
3. **Financial Effect**: How much does [the problem/illegal immigration] affect your life on a financial basis?

Interest in [the Problem] (Cronbach alpha= .80)

Interest in Illegal Immigration (Cronbach alpha= .88)

4. **Attention**: How much would you say you pay attention to [the problem/illegal immigration] when you come across it in the news?

5. **Interest**: How interested are you in [the problem/illegal immigration] when other people talk about it?

Evaluations of [the Problem] (Cronbach alpha= .16)

Evaluations of Illegal Immigration (Cronbach alpha= .39)

6. **Major National**: How much would you say [the problem/illegal immigration] is a major problem facing the nation?

7. **Major Community**: How much would you say [the problem/illegal immigration] is a major problem facing the community in which you live?

8. **Media Coverage**: How good a job have the news media done covering [the problem/illegal immigration]?

Respondents' evaluations of their experience and interest with both their self-identified most important problem and illegal immigration achieved sufficient reliability. The fact that high reliability was established twice for each scale increased the confidence of the reliability findings. Therefore, the grand means of the items that comprised the experience and interest will be reported in the findings. Since evaluations failed to achieve sufficient reliability, the individual items will be reported.

FINDINGS

The hypothesis predicted differences in how respondents perceive their self-identified most important problem from another social problem-- illegal immigration. Table 1 reports the mean perception values (ranging from +2 to -2) of the responses to the "most important problem" question and illegal immigration (*t*-values with two-tailed tests for significance). The findings indicate strong support for the hypothesis.

Table 1 goes about here

For all three perceptive categories (experience, interest and the evaluation items) the most important problem question was judged significantly higher than illegal immigration at the $p < .001$ level. Thus, when identifying their self-selected most important problem compared to illegal immigration, respondents designate an issue that they feel personally affects them, interests them, and rates higher as the most important problem facing the nation and community than illegal immigration. They also judged media coverage of their self-selected problem better than of illegal immigration. Since respondents' self-selected most important problem was compared to only one other problem selected by the researchers, the findings might not hold had other issues been compared with respondents' most important problem.

Some findings were so extreme and shed light on respondents' feelings regarding the most important problem of singular salience that they deserve special attention. Not surprisingly, respondents' perceptions of "a major problem facing the nation" was rated extremely high (*M*= 1.40). Also not surprising, given the tendency for people to be critical of the media, respondents' evaluations of media coverage of both issues were low. It was somewhat surprising, however, that the self-selected problem rated higher in this category (*M*= 0.14) than illegal immigration (*M*= -0.25), since respondents might be expected to be particularly critical of news coverage of an issue that they felt strongly about.

The latter hypotheses compare Hispanics and non-Hispanics. The second hypothesis predicted that there are differences by ethnicity in how respondents evaluate the ethnic-relevant issue of illegal immigration. This question was asked because Hispanics were expected to reference themselves to this issue be more ego-involved with illegal immigration than non-Hispanics. Table 2 indicates no consistent evidence for Hispanics to perceive illegal immigration differently than non-Hispanics. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported. There was no difference between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding experience with illegal immigration. However, Hispanics were significantly more interested in illegal immigration than non-Hispanics. Hispanics judged illegal immigration to be less important national problem than non-Hispanics and, while both groups rated media coverage of the issue negatively, Hispanics rated media coverage of the issue more negatively than non-Hispanics.

Table 2 goes about here

To test the third hypothesis, Table 3 reports the responses of Hispanics and non-Hispanics to the "most important problem." The findings yielded a consistent tendency for Hispanics to rate experience, interest and one of the three evaluation measures (i.e, media coverage) higher than non-Hispanics. Thus, the hypothesis was supported. Hispanics and non-Hispanics did not rate their self-selected problem differently as a major national or community problem.

Table 3 goes about here

Post-Hoc Analysis

To further explore whether ethnic differences account for the salience of problems, the two most mentioned problems-- the economy and crime, respectively-- were individually examined.

Table 4 reports Hispanics and non-Hispanics' perceptions of the economy among respondents who identified the economy as the most important problem. As was found in the earlier analysis with the most important problem (see Table 3), these findings further substantiate a tendency for Hispanics to attribute greater experience and interest than non-Hispanics to the problem that they perceive of singular salience. But these findings pertain to the minority of Hispanics and non-Hispanics who identified this problem as most important, and, as Table 5 with crime indicates, differences might be due to problem differences rather than ethnic differences. There were no differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding crime.

Tables 4 and 5 go about here

DISCUSSION

This study sought to explicate two persisting problems in agenda-setting: How do respondents perceive their "most important problem" of "singular salience"? and Are there ethnic differences in how respondents perceive problems in the public sphere?

This study reported vast differences in how respondents perceived their self-identified "most important problem" from a selected problem-- in this case illegal immigration. When respondents identified their issue of unique salience, they picked an issue that they rated high on experience, interest, and evaluations. The consistency and strength of this finding underscores the importance that people attribute to "the" problem that they judge of singular importance.

This finding suggests that agenda-setting researchers reconsider or revise procedures that have respondents evaluate a series of issues from a pre-determined list to measure the relative salience of issues, or at least include a caveat about the weaknesses with this procedure. Although a list might make sense on theoretical grounds and as a means to practically deal with the possible range of responses and unwieldy responses that cannot be categorized, a list might falsely leave the impression that all ranked issues are equal distance from each other: As if the difference between rank issue 1 and 2 is no different than between 2 and 3, 3 and 4, and so on. In fact, a better model might portray issue 1 as far and away on the top of the agenda by itself, nowhere near the other issues clustered at the bottom.

These findings were limited by the fact that the salience of each respondent's self-selected issue was compared with only one other issue-- albeit a major, controversial issue in the news with particular relevance to the geographic region. While issues selected for comparison with the issue of singular salience will always be limited by researcher selection, future research should compare respondents' self-selected issues of singular salience with other issues to better understand what makes people regard an issue as salient.

The hypothesis predicting differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding the ethnically relevant issue of illegal immigration was not supported. Hispanics viewed illegal immigration with more interest than non-Hispanics, but they did not perceive more experience with the issue than non-Hispanics. These findings indicate that it is possible to exhibit interest in an issue without perceiving more experience with the issue than other people. The interest/experience question bears relevance to the concept of "obtrusiveness" in agenda-setting. Agenda-setting researchers have traditionally conceived of obtrusiveness as direct, physical experience with an issue. But interest absent experience might endow the issue with characteristics usually associated with an obtrusive issue.

A curious finding that might shed light on the differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding illegal immigration concerned differences regarding their the self-identified most important problem. Hispanics rated their self-selected problem higher in experience and interest than non-Hispanics. Since this aggregate analysis might have masked differences by problems, *post-hoc* analysis examined differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics regarding the two most mentioned problems in the study. The *post-hoc* analyses with the issues of the economy and crime suggested possible differences between how Hispanics and non-Hispanics perceive a salient issue. Hispanics perceived greater experience and interest in the economy than non-Hispanics. But the fact that this finding did not hold with crime suggests that there are differences by issues as well as ethnicity that need to be explored.

The findings highlight the need to elaborate the salience concept. This study found salience differences by experience, evaluations, interest, and ethnicity. There are likely more aspects of a social problem that lead people to perceive it as salient. The literature on agenda-setting is rife in contingencies that enhance or mediate the news media's agenda-setting influence (McCombs, 1992). The findings also highlight the need to elaborate the "obtrusiveness" concept, the subject of a substantial body of research in agenda-setting. Researchers need to understand what respondents mean when they state that they "experience" a social problem. Until such questions are elaborated, agenda-setting will continue to be open to the criticism that it is "an apt metaphor, but it is no theory" (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, p. 3).

continue to be open to the criticism that it is "an apt metaphor, but it is no theory" (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, p. 3).

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Table 1: Perceptions of Self-Selected Problem and Immigration*

PERCEPTION	Self-Selected *M*	Self-Selected *SD*	Immigration *M*	Immigration *SD*	*t*-value
Experience with the Problem	0.28	1.09	-0.36	0.98	13.09***
		n=604			
Interest in the Problem	1.11	0.82	0.38	1.00	16.39***
		n= 604			
Evaluations of the Problem					
Major National	1.40	0.74	0.49	0.97	19.28***
		n= 608			
Major Community	0.50	1.08	0.24	1.35	4.45***
		n= 590			
Media Coverage	0.14	1.12	-0.25	0.93	8.29***
		n= 586			

* n-sizes are the same for both groups because the same respondents are compared regarding both the self-selected and immigration problems

*** $p < .001$

Table 2: Perceptions of Immigration by Hispanics and Non-Hispanics

PERCEPTION	Hispanics *M*	*SD*	Non-Hispanics *M*	*SD*	*t*-value
Experience with the Problem	-0.22	1.10	-0.38	0.94	1.57
	n= 142		n= 421		
Interest in the Problem	0.86	1.02	0.28	0.94	6.13***
	n= 142		n= 421		
Evaluations of the Problem					
Major National	0.23	1.05	0.59	0.92	3.65***
	n= 142		n= 421		
Major Community	0.16	1.25	0.22	1.43	0.48
	n= 138		n= 407		
Media Coverage	-0.43	1.04	-0.19	0.87	2.42*
	n= 142		n= 403		

* p (.05

*** $p < .001$

Table 3: Perceptions of Self-Selected Problem by Hispanics and Non-Hispanics

PERCEPTION	Hispanics *M*	Hispanics *SD*	Non-Hispanics *M*	Non-Hispanics *SD*	*t*-value
Experience with the Problem	0.65	1.18	0.18	1.01	4.26***
	n= 142		n= 417		
Interest in the Problem	1.41	0.74	1.03	0.79	5.04***
	n= 142		n= 417		
Evaluations of the Problem					
Major National	1.31	0.89	1.44	0.66	1.58
	n= 142		n= 415		
Major Community	0.68	1.11	0.49	1.06	1.85
	n= 138		n= 396		
Media Coverage	-0.04	1.16	0.22	1.12	2.31**
	n= 142		n= 410		

* n-sizes can vary for groups because different respondents in mutually exclusive groups (i.e., Hispanics and non-Hispanics) evaluated the salience of immigration.

** p (.05

*** $p < .001$

Table 4: Perceptions of Economy by Hispanics and Non-Hispanics*

	Hispanics		Non-Hispanics		
PERCEPTION	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-value
Experience with the Problem	1.06	0.87	0.27	1.02	5.61***
	n= 53		n= 173		
Interest in the Problem	1.07	0.84	0.79	0.86	2.09**
	n= 53		n= 173		
Evaluations of the Problem					
Major National	0.79	1.08	1.57	0.58	5.03***
	n= 53		n= 173		
Major Community	0.51	1.00	0.29	1.22	1.27
	n= 49		n= 171		
Media Coverage	-0.30	0.99	-0.17	1.05	0.84
	n= 53		n= 172		

* The word "economy" is reported in this table for convenience. In each questionnaire callers used the appropriate term later coded as economy (i.e., cost of living, unemployment, etc.).

** *p* (.05

*** $p < .001$

Table 5: Perceptions of Crime by Hispanics and Non-Hispanics

	Hispanics		Non-Hispanics		
PERCEPTION	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-value
Experience with the Problem	0.02	0.99	-1.67	0.81	1.18
	n=	40	n= 125		
Interest in the Problem	1.40	0.75	1.23	0.69	1.30
	n=	40	n= 125		
Evaluations of the Problem					
Major National	1.45	0.68	1.45	0.64	0.01
	n=	40	n= 124		
Major Community	0.73	0.93	0.64	0.94	0.50
	n=	40	n= 125		
Media Coverage	0.43	1.17	0.83	0.99	1.98
	n=	40	n= 125		

MEDIA DEPENDENCY THEORY AND THE PERCEPTION OF VIOLENCE IN PROFESSIONAL ICE HOCKEY

Quint B. Randle
Doctoral Student
Michigan State University
1603 Forest Hills Dr.
Okemos, MI 48864
(517) 347-0068
qrandle@aol.com

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Running Head: Media Dependency and Hockey Violence

ABSTRACT

This study examined mass media portrayals and the perception of violence in professional ice hockey. Based on Media Dependency Theory, it was hypothesized that individuals who are dependent on the general mass media for hockey knowledge will perceive a higher level of violence than those with more direct social experience with the game and its players. Through assumptions of Social Identity Theory, it was also hypothesized that hockey fans would selectively perceive any violence differently than non-fans. A self-questionnaire completed by nearly 400 subjects was utilized to ascertain independent and dependent variables. The hypotheses of the study were supported. Evidence was also presented strengthening the notion that print and television media have inherent qualities that provide substantially different information.

Introduction

National Hockey League games were broadcast in the U.S. by CBS in the mid 1950s and NBC in the early 1970s (McFarlane, 1989). Sufficient ratings were not attained and ice hockey became a staple of regional cable systems (Prime Ticket, Madison Square Garden Network, etc.). In 1992, with forward-thinking marketing plans from new NHL President Gary Bettman (hired on from the NBA), the league took a major step forward and signed a contract with ESPN, which reaches more than 60 million homes. ABC signed on to broadcast a number of Stanley Cup play-off games as well. But hockey ratings on both ESPN and ABC have still been weak when compared to the other major team sports (DiGiovanna, 1993). Just prior to the the abbreviated '94-'95 season (due to a salary dispute), the NHL signed a 5-year-deal with the Fox network for a relatively scant $155 million (Hickey, 1994). Regular and post-season games were televised last year on ESPN, ESPN2 and FOX. Meanwhile, league and television executives search for the formula that will "sell" NHL hockey to the U.S. market so the sport can become a more respectable mass media product.

Violence in Professional Ice Hockey

There are a number of theories why professional ice hockey has not attracted a wider audience in the U.S., especially in light of the sport's popularity north of the border. These theories have ranged from the game being a Canadian import, to the difficulty in seeing the puck on television, to the overall complexity and length of the game (Swift, 1992). One major factor offered by some to be hindering hockey's popularity is its inherent violence and fighting. While it has been reported that league leaders have indirectly promoted this violence in years past (Jones, Ferguson & Kent, 1993), a number of rules have been instituted to curb violence and fighting on the ice, as well as to control hockey's image off the ice. In fact, "Tougher rules reduced fighting by 29% last season, and you're more likely to see a bench-clearing brawl at a baseball game" (DiGiovanna, 1993).

Hockey Stereotypes in the General Mass Media

While the NHL may be moving in a less violent direction recently, the emphasis of television news is still on high drama and conflict (Gans, 1980). Any fighting or hard "body checks" found in professional ice hockey make for good sports coverage due to the inherent drama and conflict. As one veteran sports reporter said, "the natural conflicts in the world of sports, in contrast, often make news without having their true nature understood" (Koppett, 1981, p. 64).

Because of the lack of air time and limited format, general television news coverage tends to highlight these sometimes violent images. As Bryant and Zillmann stated (1983), "emphasizing violence and roughness has become an important part of the way television codifies sports/entertainment coverage." Hockey insiders agree with this analysis: It is often said that the typical sports wrap-up on any given local 11 o'clock news includes highlights of a few scoring highlights and then some raucous fight or injurious check. "They always show the fights!" said one professional hockey instructor (Glantz, 1994). General news coverage highlighting hockey's violence may have more more of an effect than fictional portrayals in movies and commercials "because of its role and function in society: While entertainment is 'make believe' the news is 'real'" (Wilson II & Gutierrez, 1985, p. 134).

Communication Theory

The Media Dependency Hypothesis (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976, 1985), provides one media effects approach that could be applied to study this situation. Among other things, media dependency theory suggests that "people depend on the media for information about social phenomena which are remote from everyday life experiences to a greater extent than they are dependent on the media in learning about phenomena which they experience directly" (Adoni, Cohen & Mane, 1985, p. 190). Direct personal experience also plays a role in other mass media effects theories such as agenda setting (Demers, Craff, Choi & Pessin, 1989, p. 793) and cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976, p. 191) Media Dependency theory might provide a partial explanation as to why fans of ice hockey who are familiar with the context and roughness of the sport, might find the game to be less violent than non-fans who create their impressions of ice hockey based on news broadcasts and other media that might emphasize its violence.

In addition to this, the process of selective perception may be operating wherein fans of ice hockey perceive the sport's inherent roughness or violence differently than non-fans due to membership in a hockey subculture. As one of several selective processes (exposure, retention, etc.), selective perception has been defined as "the tendency for people's perception to be influenced by wants, needs, attitudes, and other psychological factors" (Severin & Tankard, 1992, p. 57). The selective perception hypothesis offers that "frequently, we see or hear only what we want to see or hear and ignore all else. Our perceptions depend on our interests, backgrounds, and expectations. To a large degree, what we see or hear is dependent on what we expect to see or hear" (Wakefield, 1976, p. 3). This has been supported in a number of studies such as Vidmar and Rokeach (1974) and Hastorf and Cantril (1954).

Furthermore, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1984) suggests that individuals perceive their own group (ingroup) more positively than others (outgroups). "Social identity theory suggests that that individuals view their own group more positively than other groups and that strong group identification is related to greater differentiation between ingroup and outgroup" (Cornish, Stringer & Finlay, 1991, p. 96).

Thus, a Canadian hockey fan from Toronto, may selectively perceive the same rough play, brutal body checks and fighting differently and more positively than an American from Oklahoma City who does not know a puck and whose passion is baseball. Each of these individuals has different cultural expectations, social group identities and initial attitudes. The usual net result is that "all outgroups receive a less favorable description than does the ingroup in question." (LeVine & Campbell, 1972, p. 13)

Statement of the Problem

This study proposes that stereotypical images of conflict, violence and body contact are often-used by general news, entertainment and advertising media as symbols to communicate the excitement of professional ice hockey. As offered by the Media Dependency Hypothesis, individuals with little or no direct personal experience with, or knowledge of ice hockey are most reliant on general mass media messages (sports news highlights, commercials, etc.). Therefore, these sometimes violent visuals have the greatest cognitive and affective effects on these individuals, while those with direct personal experience and knowledge of ice hockey balance general media images with more direct, hockey-specific sources of information (full games and written newspaper reports). In addition, the Selective Perception Hypothesis and Social Identity Theory would indicate that fans of professional ice hockey (ingroup) will selectively perceive mass mediated visuals of brutal body contact, etc., differently than those with other needs and attitudes (outgroup). On the other hand, the selective perception processes will be operating differently among non-fans.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the material stated above, the following hypotheses are presented:

H1: There is a significant positive correlation between an individual's dependency on the general mass media for hockey knowledge and the amount of perceived violence in professional ice hockey.

H2: There is a significant difference in the perceived level of violence between fans and non-fans of professional ice hockey.

H3: There is a significant difference in the perceived level of violence between users and non-users of hockey specific media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hockey Violence

In general, sports violence is perceived to be less violent than the same activity or conflict that would occur off the playing field. For this reason, "legal experts still flounder in their attempts to determine what constitutes violence in sports" (Smith, 1983, p. 9). Due to the inherent body contact of ice hockey, the sport features examples of sports violence in all its forms. The history of professional ice hockey is at no loss for examples of sports violence. Entire books have been written on the subject (see Fischler, 1991 & 1993). There is no question about its inherent roughness: body checks, hip checks, stick checks, and player collisions.

The subject of sports violence has received special attention in recent years due to increased fan and player violence in all sports (European soccer games, for example), but also because "sports journalists widely believe that sports fans love violence" (Bryant & Zillmann, 1983, p. 204). So it is not surprising that the way sports media treat violence on the field and in the broadcast booth has been the subject of some scholarly discussion.

Attention has been given recently to how a commentator's verbal portrayal of a game, combined with the video portion, affects the audience's perception and enjoyment of the game; this has included perceived violence as well (see Sullivan, 1991; Brummett & Duncan, 1990; Schweitzer, Zillmann, Weaver & Luttrell, 1992). Commisky, Bryant & Brown (1977) also conducted a study indicating that a hockey commentator's verbal portrayal of a televised game might cause viewers to "'see' fierce competition where it really does not exist" (p. 150).

Another study reported that hockey television visuals and commentary "out fight" and "out conflict" other major team sports (Bryant and Zillmann, 1983).Violence has also received scholarly attention from an economic perspective at the box office. Jones, Ferguson & Stewart (1993) examined attendance data from the 1983-84 NHL season and found evidence that violence and roughness increased attendance in both Canadian and American cities.

Media Dependency Hypothesis

Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur defined mass communication as a set of "complex relationships between large sets of interacting variables" (1976, p. 5). These were broadly defined as media, audiences and society. By examining the interrelationships and interactions between these three components, a better "understanding of mass media effects can be gained" (p. 5).

Within this theory, the mass media are seen as economic means for individuals to understand and act in society, to create and resolve ambiguity, and to escape and be entertained. As society becomes more complex, its individual members form a dependency on the mass media to fulfill these needs. Individuals "begin to be less aware of what is going on in society beyond their own position in the structure" (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976, p. 4). One might infer here that "position" refers to social group memberships and experiences. The further away from direct personal experience a social object occurs the greater the dependency on the mass media for defining that social object. "The greater the need and consequently the stronger the dependency in such matters, the greater the likelihood that the information supplied will alter various forms of audience cognitions, feelings and behavior" (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976, p. 6). Because ice hockey is not a national tradition in the U.S., like baseball or football, the number and centrality of the media systems or outlets is relatively limited. The potential for direct personal experience is lacking as well.

Selective Perception of Violence

Cornish, Stringer & Finlay (1991) studied the effect of group identification on the perception of violence in Northern Ireland. They felt that perception was key because "factual reality and people's perceptions of it do not necessarily correspond, and it is perceptions which govern behavior" (p. 95). The researchers predicted that individuals would perceive locations inhabited by members of their ingroup as less violent than locations inhabited by the outgroup: Predominantly Protestant cities vs. Catholic cities and vice-versa. "Analysis of the residuals indicated that, after allowing for main effects, ingroup locations were seen as less violent than outgroup ones by both groups" (Cornish, Stringer & Finlay, 1991, p. 97).

General Mass Media vs. Hockey Specific Media

Much research has been completed examining the characteristics of the different mass media and their impact on learning and influence on public opinion. For example, studies have compared the attitudes and knowledge level of heavy television news users and heavy newspaper users. "Generally, research has indicated that television exposure is negatively and newspaper exposure is positively associated with knowledge" (Stroman & Seltzer, 1989, p. 881-882*)*. For example, Choi & Becker (1987) reported findings suggesting "that a newspaper is an effective medium in helping audience members develop a distinctive picture of each [political] candidate . . . whereas television news is not (p. 285).

In contrast to general mass media portrayals of professional ice hockey, there are also hockey specific media available to those interested enough to seek them out. These media tend to present whatever checking, roughness or violence within the context of a game. These formats to a better job of presenting "the intrinsic psychological meanings and the social implications" (Butt, 1987, p. 262) of the sport and it's players. For example, post-game newspaper articles would be considered hockey specific. Written by reporters who specialize in the game, who travel with the team, these articles tend to recount the overall story of a game: scoring, scoring opportunities and important defensive opportunities.

METHOD

Independent and Dependent Variables

The independent variables in this study are a) the degree of direct social experience with hockey, or level of media dependency; b) the intensity of hockey fanship, or strength of group identity; c) degree of hockey-specific media use. This study's dependent variable is defined as an individual's level of perceived violence in professional ice hockey. Sports violence has been defined, codified and measured in other studies, but the viewer's *perception* of violence has not been the subject of as much research.

Setting for the Study

The study was accomplished through a self-report questionnaire administered to two different sample groups. A majority of the subjects in both groups were California residents. The use of this geographic area is valid because the vast majority of the population is composed of individuals who are not fans of professional ice hockey. Thus, this general population could be considered somewhat representative of the typical non-fan that the NHL must "convert" in order for the sport to increase its fan base.

More specifically, two samples were selected. The first was drawn from students at a small private university in Southern California with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 2,500. This sample can be argued as generalizable because the age-range of these students falls within the NHL's target demographic (18-49), although somewhat at the lower end. Individuals within this age demographic are also considered heavy users of television, and are expected to be more dependent on electronic mass media for their knowledge of professional ice hockey than the second sample.

The second sample was drawn from a group of subscribers to a publication for amateur hockey players and fans. Members of this group were predicted to utilize hockey specific media and to exercise selective perception. The goal of using two different samples was to allow the variations in independent variables to be more fully maximized, as well as to examine differences and similarities across the two groups. A quota sample was systematically drawn from the list of magazine subscribers in an attempt to achieve a ratio of California residents similar to the student sample. In early September, 500 surveys were mailed to Sample 2 with a postage-paid return envelope. At the end of September a reminder postcard was sent to all 500 subjects to improve the response rate. Nine envelopes were returned by the postal service due to bad addresses, moves, etc. As of December 1, 1994, 193 surveys had been returned for an overall response rate of 39%.

The Survey Questionnaire

Prior to its completion the survey was pretested among 20 individuals. The directive questionnaire, which featured primarily close-ended questions, was composed of several tunnel-format sections designed to measure each of the independent variables. Dependent variable measures were also concealed in different sections of the survey to avoid any response bias. The polarity of scales and statements was reversed from time to time to reduce response bias, and thus to further enhance validity and reliability.

Media Use Section. The first section of the questionnaire addressed general mass media and sport-specific media use. First, 11 how many days per week media usage questions were asked. For example, a few of the programs and media addressed were: a) 9, 10 or 11 p.m. local news broadcasts; b) sports news shows on cable networks; c) sports section of the local paper; and d) all-sports radio. National network news broadcasts were not included because they rarely include sports highlights.

Next, television viewing was addressed. Three questions ascertained the number of hours watched on an average Saturday, Sunday and weekday. This was followed by an assessment of how many games (football, baseball, basketball and hockey) the subject viewed each week during each sport's respective season. Subjects were then asked to list non-game shows they watched on a regular basis (up to three for each of the four sports). To help avoid sensitization, the first three sections of the survey addressed all four major U.S. team sports.

Section one concluded with questions regarding sport-specific print media use. Likert-style questions addressed how many newspaper articles were read per week specifically about each of the four major team sports. Subjects were also asked to list up to three sport-specific publications they read on a regular basis, for each of the four sports.

Fanship Section. The goal of the survey's second section was to assess the independent variable, level of fanship. To avoid response bias, statements for all four major team sports were addressed. Nine Likert-type agree-disagree statements were presented for each of the sports for a total of 49 statements. For example, "I regularly attend football games" appeared under the football section, as did a similar statement in the section on baseball, ice hockey and basketball. Other statements related to viewing of games on television, listening to games on the radio, memorabilia collecting, purchasing team apparel, and so on.

Sports Violence Definition Section. Dependent variable measures were found in the next three sections of the survey. In this straightforward segment, the subjects were asked to rate the four major team sports on a 10-point scale (0 = least, 10 = greatest) in terms of both severe body contact and borderline violence as defined by Smith (1983). For example, severe body contact was defined as "hard-hitting body contact that falls within the official rules of each sport and is more or less accepted by players and fans."

Semantic Differential Scales Section. This next section continued to measure the level of perceived sports violence. Seven-point semantic differential scales (following Osgood, Suci and Tannebaum, 1957) were constructed along the lines described by Forbes (1985) in measuring attitudes towards social groups. Pairs included a) fast-slow, b) safe-dangerous, c) rough-smooth, d) peaceful-violent, e) calm-ferocious, f) pleasant-unpleasant dimensions. Again, perceptions of all four major sports were assessed.

Hockey Section. After these general sections, the subjects encountered an in-depth section that was about ice hockey. Eight Likert-type agree-disagree statements were made having to do with direct and indirect aspects of hockey violence (1 = strongly disagree, 9 = strongly agree). For example, statements included, "Pro hockey is a very violent sport" and "A fast-moving puck is very dangerous." etc. The goal of these statements was to provide increased depth in defining perceived hockey violence. This section also contained statements pertaining to the independent variable, media dependency, as well. For instance, one statement designed to measure direct social experience with hockey was "I've never attended a hockey game."

After these hockey-only statements, the survey was basically complete, except for demographic questions. It was hoped that by the time the subject realized, "Hey, this survey is about violence in ice hockey," the questionnaire had, in effect, been finished.

Description of the Combined Samples

As mentioned above, the data were gathered through surveys completed by 414 individuals: 221 subjects from a purposive sample of university students, 193 from the purposive quota sample of hockey publication subscribers. Surveys completed by subjects under the age of 18 and those with extensive missing data were removed before data analysis. The resultant sample was 376.

The completed surveys (*N*= 376) showed that 54% of the respondents were male and 46% female, with the mean age being 25 years (median = 20, mode = 18). The value of the mode reflects the relatively large number of college freshmen taking part in the study. Ninety-four percent reported that they had grown up in the U.S., 2% in Canada and 4% in other countries. Furthermore, of the U.S. residents, 49% reported that they had been raised in California with 36 other states representing the remainder. Thus, the sampling methods were successful in obtaining a large number of native Californians in both the college student and magazine subscriber samples.

Education, income and ethnicity items reflected the makeup of both private university students and hockey fans in general. The median education level completed was a high school degree or GED (28%), followed by college freshman (24%) and college sophomore (14%). More than 94% of the subjects either attended or graduated college.

Scale Construction

Independent Variables

Media Dependency: In order to ascertain any dimensionality of this independent variable, factor analysis was run on the individual items that comprised the scale. As reported in Table 1, factoring yielded one factor with all but one of the five variables loading on this factor. The statement that did not load was, "Most of what I know about ice hockey I've learned from watching television or reading the newspaper."

Table 1
Varimax Factor Loadings for Media Dependency Scale

	Factor 1	Factor 2
No friends who are hockey fans	***.719**	.244
Learned about hockey through the media	.153	*.979
Never attended a hockey game	***.753**	.137
Don't know anyone who plays hockey.	***.744**	.015
Friends and I converse about hockey	***.804**	-.157

Note. $p < .01$, $df(14)$, Factor 1 eigenvalue = 2.53.

While the other four variables were related to direct social experience with hockey (i.e., attending games, conversing with friends, etc.), the statement that did not load was more related to media usage. The degree of media dependency is due to a lack of social experience, not necessarily the level of media usage. This item was excluded in the unidimensional media dependency scale. The final 36-point scale had a mean score of 15.13 ($SD = 9.73$). Furthermore, to ensure and demonstrate scale reliability, correlational analysis were completed between the four individual items and the final scale; correlations ranged from .71 to .81 ($p < .0001$). Cronbach's alpha was reported at .77.

Level of Fanship: Fanship level, or strength of social identity, was measured by totaling the data from seven 9-point Likert-style statements. Factor analysis confirmed the unidimensional characteristics of the fanship scale. All seven of the fanship variables loaded heavily on one factor with factor loadings ranging from .79 to .91. This scale also attained an alpha score of .97.

Hockey Specific Media Use: This scale was composed of two Likert-style questions about the number of hockey games watched per week and the number of newspaper articles read per week about hockey (none = least, 7 = greatest). Also included in the scale were two open-ended questions that ascertained up to three hockey specific television shows, and up to three hockey publications watched or read on a regular basis. Subjects were awarded two points for each show viewed or publication read, with a maximum of six points on each question. This was done to create balance between this and the Likert portion of the scale. Combining the data from the four hockey questions yielded a Hockey Specific Media score with a potential of 26-points (*M* = 7.47, *SD* = 7.61).

Dependent Variable

Level of Perceived Violence: No perception of sports violence scale was identified in reviewing the literature. Therefore, a scale was constructed within three different sections of the survey. First, from the sports violence definition section, subjects were asked to separately rate ice hockey on a 10-point scale (0 = least, 10 = greatest) in terms of both severe body contact and borderline violence as defined by Smith (1983). Severe body contact was defined as hard-hitting body contact that falls within the official rules of the sport and is accepted by players and fans. Borderline violence was defined as action that violates the official rules of the sport — penalties or infractions are called — but is somewhat accepted by fans and players as a by-product of the game.

Next, from the semantic differential section, 7-point semantic differential scales were utilized. Pairs included a) fast-slow, b) safe-dangerous, c) rough-smooth, d) peaceful-violent, e) calm-ferocious, f) pleasant-unpleasant. Finally, in the in-depth section on ice hockey, the eight agree-disagree statements having to do with direct and indirect aspects of hockey violence were also included in the scale. The statements were as follows: a) Pro hockey is a very violent sport, b) Hockey coaches sometimes throw objects at referees, c) A fast-moving puck is very dangerous, d) You're more likely to see a bench-clearing brawl at a baseball game than at a hockey game, e) Ice hockey players rarely suffer career-ending injuries, f) In hockey, fighting is accepted as "part of the game," g) Hockey players rarely break or bruise their ribs, h) Hockey sticks sometimes cause bloody, but minor cuts.

Prior to gathering the data it was hoped that all of the perception-of-violence variables could later be be factor analyzed to determine if the concept was multi-dimensional or unidimensional in nature. First analysis yielded five factors ($p < .01$, *df*(135) with one eigenvalue of 4.38 and the other four ranging from 1.0 to 1.8. Four items did not load and the fifth factor contained only one isolate ("In hockey, fighting is accepted as 'part of the game'", eigenvalue = 1). The variables were then factor analyzed again forcing four factors. The results yielded four factors with 10 of the 16 original items loading ($p < .01$, *df*(135), eigenvalues = 4.38, 1.8, 1.26, 1.08). Varimax factor loading scores are shown in Table 2 on the following page. The items that did not load were, a) the

Likert statements, "Hockey coaches sometimes throw objects at the referees," "You're more likely to see a bench-clearing brawl at a baseball game than at a hockey game," and "In hockey, fighting is accepted as 'part of the game'"; b) the semantic differential item, rough-smooth; and, c) the 10-point rating of hockey's illegal borderline violence.

Table 2
Varimax Factor Loadings for Perceived Hockey Violence

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Brutal body contact definition	.094	***.693**	.125	.062
Borderline violence definition	-.119	.442	.279	.202
Fast-Slow	.083	***-.692**	.265	-.034
Safe-Dangerous	-.329	.287	***.647**	.042
Rough-Smooth	.244	-.527	-.220	-.001
Peaceful-Violent	-.200	.318	***.767**	-.052
Calm-Ferocious	-.054	.496	***.643**	-.002
Pleasant-Unpleasant	-.350	-.121	.514	-.085
Hockey is violent	-.201	.025	***.710**	.192
Coaches throw objects	-.165	-.345	.496	.267
Puck is dangerous	-.156	-.049	.306	***.646**
Bench-clearing brawls	.478	-.009	-.491	.096
Career-ending injuries	***.805**	-.059	-.185	-.055
Fighting is part of the game	.211	.019	.421	.254
Bruised ribs	***.751**	-.145	-.108	-.090
Sticks cause minor cuts	.049	.225	-.146	***.775**

The factor loadings were utilized to create the following factors, supporting the possible multi-dimensional nature of the perception of sports violence:

Factor one was identified as the Injury factor. This scale comprised the two Likert statements, "Ice hockey players rarely suffer career-ending injuries," and "Hockey players rarely break or bruise their ribs" ($M = 12.37$, $SD = 4.14$). The first item correlated with the overall factor at .88, while the second item's correlation was .85 ($p < .01$).

Factor two was titled the Body Contact factor and included two items: a 10-point rating of hockey's inherent body contact that fell within the rules of the sport, and a 7-point semantic differential rating of fast-slow ($M = 15.81$, $SD = 1.85$). The first item correlated with the overall factor at .94, while the second item's correlation was .61 ($p < .01$).

The third factor was identified as the Emotion factor and included four items which seemed to be more interpretive and perceptual in nature. Three items were 7-point semantic differential ratings: safe-dangerous, peaceful-violent and calm-ferocious. The fourth item was a 9-point Likert statement, "Pro hockey is a very violent sport" (*M* = 23.83, *SD* = 4.96). Individual item correlations with the factor scale ranged from .74 to .83 ($p < .01$). and the alpha score was .82.

Factor four was titled the Game Object factor and included two Likert statements having to do with paraphernalia used in playing the game. These statements were, "A fast-moving puck is very dangerous," and "Hockey sticks sometimes cause bloody, but minor cuts" (*M* = 10.87, *SD* = 2.89). Correlations were .59 and .69 respectively ($p < .01$).

The four factors were summed to create a total Perception of Violence score (*M* = 62.84 and a *SD* = 9.12). Cronbach's alpha for the total Perception of Violence scale was .77.

Other Independent Variables

Several potential mediating or intervening variables not used in the hypotheses of this study were identified and operationalized. These variables were selected for use in multiple regression test: General News Media Use, Sports News Use and Television Viewing.

RESULTS

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One. The first hypothesis predicted a significant positive correlation between an individual's dependency on the general mass media for hockey knowledge and the level of perceived violence in the sport. This hypothesis was tested through correlational analysis between the Media Dependency and Perceived Violence scales. A correlation of .38 was reported (*N* = 357, $p < .0001$, 95% confidence interval ranged from .28 to .46). In secondary analysis, correlation tests on the Media Dependency scale and the four Perceived Violence factors yielded the results outlined in Table 3.

Table 3
Media Dependency and Perceived Violence Factor Correlations

Factor	Dependency Correlation	p value	95% Confidence Interval
Injury Factor	.27	< .001*	.17 to .37
Body Contact Factor	-.15	.003*	-.25 to .-05
Emotion Factor	.41	< .001*	.32 to .50
Game Object Factor	.19	.002*	.09 to .29

Note. * Significant

Hypothesis Two. The second hypothesis of this study predicted that there is a significant difference in the perceived level of violence between fans and non-fans of professional ice hockey. A median split (median = 34) was made on the fanship scale to create a nominal variable with two groups — high fanship and low fanship. Subjects scoring greater than 34 were classified as high group (*N* = 178); those scoring less than 34 were classified as low group (*N* = 177).

This hypothesis was tested via unpaired t tests, comparing each group's average Perceived Violence score. Fans were found to perceive significantly less violence (*M* = 58.68, *SD* = 8.66) than non-fans (*M* = 67.06, *SD* = 7.50, $p < .0001$, mean difference = -8.38, $t(353) = -9.74$, 95% confidence interval = -10.07 to -6.69).

Results of secondary analysis of the four violence factors are presented in Table 4:

Table 4
Fan/Non-Fan Mean Differences, by Factor

Factor	Mean Difference	*df*	*t* value	*p* value	95% Confidence Interval
Injury Factor	-2.93	364	-7.26	<.0001*	-3.7 to -2.1
Body Contact Factor	+0.53	362	+2.77	.0058*	.16 to ..91
Emotion Factor	-4.47	363	-9.63	<.0001*	-5.4 to -3.6
Game Object Factor	-1.54	362	-5.24	<.0001*	-2.1 to -.96

Note. * Significant

Thus, fans perceive significantly fewer potential injuries and violence, yet they perceive significantly more "legal" severe body contact and speed (falling within the rules of the game).

Hypothesis Three. H3 predicted a significant difference in the level of perceived violence between users of hockey specific media and those who used only general mass media sources for hockey knowledge. To create the nominal variable, hockey-specific media users (*N* = 237) were defined as those who scored greater than 0 on the Hockey Media Usage scale; those who scored 0 were considered general mass media users (*N* = 120). Operationalizing users in this manner allowed the inclusions of more casual hockey fans in the high group — those who may just watch a game from time to time — than if a median split were used to create the low and high groups.

As predicted, unpaired t tests, comparing each group's Level of Perceived Violence score demonstrated that hockey specific media users perceived significantly less violence (*M* = 60.25, *SD* = 8.9) than users of the general media (*M* = 67.94, *SD* = 7.20) with a mean difference of 7.69.

($p < .0001$, $t(355) = -8.20$, and 95% confidence interval = -9.53 to -5.84.

Results of secondary analysis of the four factors are outlined in Table 5:

Table 5
Hockey Media User/Non-User Group Mean Differences, By Factor

Factor	Mean Difference	*df*	*t* value	*p* value	95% Confidence Interval
Injury Factor	-2.47	367	-5.626	<.0001*	-3.3 to -1.6
Body Contact Factor	+0.37	364	+1.83	.0672	-.02 to.78
Emotion Factor	-4.14	365	-8.23	<.0001*	-5.13 to -3.15
Game Object Factor	-1.49	364	-4.80	<.0001*	-2.1 to -.87

Note. * Significant

Hockey Specific media users perceive significantly fewer potential injuries and violence in the game than non-hockey specific media users. But in terms of "legal" brutal body contact and speed (falling within the rules of the game), there is no significant difference between the two groups, although the slight difference does approach significance ($p = .067$).

Multiple Regression

Multiple regression was utilized to test the overall significance of this study's model and to further examine the inter-relationship of the independent variables and dependent variable in terms of perceived violence. Table 6 indicates that the overall model was significant ($p < .0001$). Furthermore, of the six independent variables in the model, Level of Fanship ($p < .0005$, standard coefficient = -.258) was significant in predicting an individual's perceived level of violence in professional ice hockey. The overall adjusted R squared value was .21.

Table 6
Multiple Regression Table for Perceived Violence and Six Variables

Independent Variable	*B*	*t* value	*p* value
Television Viewing X1	-.069	-.714	.2224
General News Media X2	-.074	-1.13	.2581
Sports News Media X3	-.044	-.547	.5850
Hockey Specific Media X4	.015	.134	.8933
Level of Fanship X5	-.337	-2.96	.0032 *
Media Dependency X6	.066	.923	.3564
Intercept	69.28	33.28	< .0001 *

Note. $N = 352$, * Significant

Multiple regression analysis were also run for each of the factors and the same six independent variables. For the Emotion factor, the model was significant (p <.0001, t = 23.73, adjusted R squared = .22.), while both Fanship (p <.023, t = -2.29, B = -.25) and News Media usage (p <.043, t = -2.03, B = -.13) were significant individual predictors. The regression model for the Injury factor was also significant (p <.0001, t = 14.26, adjusted R squared = .10.) while Fanship was the sole significant predictor (p <.033, t = -2.14, B = -.26)

For the Contact factor regression (p <.0001, t = 34.54, adjusted R squared = .05.), both Sport News (p <.01, t = 2.57, B = .22) and Television Viewing (p <.003, t = -3.02, B = -.19) were significant predictors. Finally, multiple regression on the Game Object factor (p <.0001, t = 17.59, adjusted R squared = .10.) showed Sports News (p <.0004, t = -3.57, B = -.30) to be the sole significant predictor.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis One. In this case as direct social experience with ice hockey decreased, general mass media dependency increased. Thus, the more dependent one is on the general mass media for understanding ice hockey, the more violent the sport is perceived to be. This is possibly due to the way mass media stereotype the sport; those who do not have any direct experience to counter-balance what is presented use these representations to create their overall impression of the sport.

Of special interest is the seemingly contrary finding that the Body Contact factor, comprising "legal" brutal body contact (within the rules of the game) and the sport's speed, is negatively correlated with Media Dependency. Upon closer examination, this finding actually supports the Media Dependency Hypothesis. The more media dependent one is, the less "legal" body contact one perceives possibly because the contact is being interpreted as "illegal" contact or borderline violence. This may be because game highlights, humorous TV commercials, and other general mass media representations showcase exaggerations of the game, do not provide context, show penalties being called, etc. A hockey highlight segment on the news might show an injurious body check, but will not show the resulting penalty and possible game ejection for charging or intent to injure. Although, this information might sometimes be presented verbally.

Those less mass media dependent who have direct experience with the game — who know the rules and context of body contact — perceive more "legal" brutal body contact within the rules of the game and less "illegal" body contact, possibly due to the inherent speed and context of the game. Media dependent individuals may tend to perceive visuals of legal brutal body contact — as presented in the general mass media — as borderline violence, which violates the rules of the game. This interpretation is further supported by the correlation between the borderline violence item on the questionnaire and Media Dependency ($r = .12$, $p = .0219$, 95% confidence interval = .01 to .22). It should be noted that this item did not load to any of the identified factors during factor analysis of the hockey violence items and was not included in the total Perceived Violence scale.

Hypothesis Two. Unpaired *t*-tests and multiple regression analysis supported this hypothesis: Hockey fans perceive significantly less violence in the sport than non-fans. Fanship was also the single significant predictor in the overall multiple regression model. Hockey devotees probably selectively perceive fewer acts of true violence than non-fans. Moreover, they possibly view these incidents more positively — due to differing social meanings — than non-fans.

This notion was further supported by comparing the high and low group differences in terms of the four dimensions of sports violence. Hockey fans perceive significantly less violence (as measured by the Emotion factor), fewer injuries (Injury factor), less danger (Game Object factor) while at the same time perceiving significantly more legal body contact and speed (Body Contact factor). Theoretically, this falls in line with Social Identity Theory wherein individuals perceive ingroup behaviors, customs, etc., more positively and outgroup behaviors more negatively. Hockey fans see the inherent body contact and speed as positive, exciting elements of the game. At the same time they perceive any resulting brutality and injuries as less violent than non-fans. Non-fans, on the other hand, do not see the sport as being as fast and exciting, and any accompanying violence and injuries as more illegitimate, violent and dangerous than fans.

Hypothesis Three. H3 of this study offered that users of hockey specific media perceive less violence than those who rely solely on general mass media sources for hockey knowledge. The results of unpaired *t*-tests supported this hypothesis as well.

The purpose of this hypothesis was to pursue one of the suggestions hinted at in the literature review: that print and television tell substantially different stories of professional ice hockey. Hypothesis Three's independent variable (type of media used) was split up along the lines of fanship and the multiple regression analysis of the overall model did not suggest any significant relationship. Fans of ice hockey use general mass media *and* hockey specific media, while non-fans use only general mass media. Further, fans perceive less violence than non-fans. Thus, hockey specific media users perceived less violence than general mass media users.

However, what if there were a relationship between the types of media used and fans' perception of violence? These individuals would tend to possess a relatively lower level of media dependency compared to non-fans. The literature suggests that print users might perceive less violence in hockey because the information in this medium would tend to balance whatever visuals and violent highlights they might see on television. As Stroman & Seltzer (1989) stated, "television exposure is negatively and newspaper exposure is positively associated with knowledge" (p. 881-882). Moreover, this study seems to indicate that the more knowledge one has about ice hockey the less violent its perception. It was hypothesized that among hockey fans, as hockey specific print use increased the perception of hockey violence violence would decrease.

For hockey fans, two new independent variables were created by sub-dividing the original Hockey Specific Media Use scale by print and television media. The hockey specific print items were, "How many times during an average week do you read articles in your local newspaper about hockey?" with a corresponding 7-point Likert scale, and "Please list by title any specialty magazines or tabloids you read on a regular basis about hockey." Subjects had been awarded two points for each publication listed with a maximum of six points. This new independent variable for assessing hockey specific print use had a mean of 9.90 and standard deviation of 3.54.

The other new variable, measuring hockey specific television use, was composed of, "How many hockey games do you watch during an average week?" with a corresponding 7-point Likert scale, and "Beside actual game telecasts and the news, please list by title an other TV shows about hockey you watch on a regular basis." Subjects had been awarded two points for each show listed with a maximum of six points. The Hockey Specific Television Use scale had a mean of 5.98, standard deviation of 2.95.

Correlational analyses of the Perceived Violence and Hockey Specific Print Use scales for hockey fans only (high group as operationalized in Hypothesis Two) showed a -.16 correlation ($N = 200$, $p < .0187$, 95% confidence interval range of -.298 to -.028). This test confirms that even among hockey fans there is a slight, negative correlation between the perception of hockey violence and hockey specific print media use. Even among hockey fans, as hockey specific print use increases, the perception of hockey violence decreases. The correlation between the Hockey Specific Television Use and the Perceived Violence scale was not significant ($N = 200, p < .576$).

Although these findings might tend to support a media effects explanation — albeit with no direct proof of causation — there is an alternative explanation. Possibly, these may be individuals who enjoy the finer points and complexities of the game, but do not appreciate the more violent aspects of the game — especially under the microscopic lens of the television camera. These individuals therefore seek out more in-depth and intellectual information via the print medium, while simultaneously, selectively perceiving less violence in the game.

Overall Significance of Model

As presented in chapter 4, this study's overall model suggests that the amount of direct social experience with the game (media dependency), combined with strength of group identity (level of fanship), and degree and types of media used, was a significant equation in predicting the perceived level of violence in ice hockey. Multiple regression demonstrated that this overall model accounted for 21% of the variance in the dependent variable, Perceived Violence.

And while fanship was the significant sole predictor in tests of the total Perceived Violence variable, results of multiple regression of the four violence factors against the same six independent variables was mixed, pointing to several possible explanations. For example, General News Media Usage (in addition to fanship) was negatively associated ($p < .0427$, $t = -2.03$, $B = -.13$) with the Emotion factor of perceived violence. This seems to contradict the hypotheses or suggest some type of desensitization effect. In the multiple regression of the Game Object factor, the sole significant predictor was Sports News Usage ($p < .0004$, $t = -3.57$, $B = -.30$). This negative association is somewhat confusing and would seem to contradict the hypotheses as well.

Upon further reflection and completion of the the tests involved in the discussion of Hypothesis Three earlier in this chapter, the question of whether the grouping of both print and television media together in the hockey, sports and general news usage variables was creating some type of cancellation effect on the overall impact of any particular variable. This was based on the idea that print usage seemed to be associated with an increase in knowledge and that television tends to highlight violence. The question of how a traditional social locator such as age might play into the equation was raised as well.

Multiple regression analyses were run again. This time, each of the media usage variables were sub-divided by print and television as discussed previously. The variable Hockey Specific Media Use was divided into two variables: Hockey Specific Print Use and Hockey Specific Television Use; Sports News Usage became Sports Television News Usage and Sports Print News usage; General News Media Use were subdivided into General Television News Use and General Print News Usage. The Age variable was also included in the model.

Results of multiple regression against the main dependent variable, Perceived Violence, showed that the overall model was significant ($p < .0001$, $t = 33.05$, adjusted R-squared = .275), but the only significant predictor was Age ($p = .0004$, $t = -3.6$, $B = -.20$). The older the subject was the less total Perceived Violence. However, this finding was probably an artifact due to a major age difference between the sample groups: The university sample was composed primarily of 18-year-old non-fans, while subjects from the publication sample were primarily hockey fans ranging in age from 18 to 77. This notion was supported by multiple regression tests of each sample group separately; age was no longer a significant predictor in either sample group.

Whatever the case may be, regression tests of the four violence factors yielded findings more in keeping with the media effects theories of this study. The results of multiple regression tests with the Emotion factor are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Multiple Regression: Emotion Factor and Sub-Divided Variables
Y = Emotion Factor of Perceived Violence

Independent Variable	*B*	*t*-value	*p*-value
Fanship	-.089	-.808	.419
Dependency	.165	2.44	.015 *
Television Viewing	.000	.002	.998
Hockey Specific Television Use	.182	2.21	.028 *
Hockey Specific Print Use	-.345	-3.29	.001 *
General Television News Use	-.114	-1.76	.078
General Print News Use	.064	.981	.327
General Sports Television Use	-.115	-1.4	.162
General Sports Print Use	.120	1.44	.151
Age	-.188	-3.41	<.001 *
Intercept	26.74	23.79	<.0001 *

Note. * = Significant, $N = 361$, Adjusted R-squared = .30

The significance of this modified model and specific variables support the arguments of this paper. Fanship was no longer a significant predictor; yet Media Dependency was associated with an increase in the Emotion factor of Perceived Violence. So when examining the more affective element of the perception of violence in ice hockey, Media Dependency was a significant predictor — even while controlling for fanship. This finding supports Media Dependency Theory. Furthermore, Hockey Specific Print Use was associated with a significant decrease in the Emotion factor, while Hockey Specific Television Use was associated with a significant increase. This would support the notion that different media provide significantly different descriptions of professional ice hockey; the effect of these descriptions are significant even while controlling for level of fanship and other important intervening variables.

Multiple regression of the (legal) Body Contact factor provided additional support for possible media effects as well. While Media Dependency was not a significant individual predictor, both Television Viewing ($p = .005$, $t = -2.85$, $B = -.181$) and General Television News Use ($p = .005$, $t = -2.83$, $B = -.211$) were associated with a decrease in this factor's score. The more television and television news one watches, the less legitimate and legal body contact one perceives in hockey. Furthermore, General Print Use ($p = .05$, $t = 1.95$, $B = .147$) and Sports Television News Use ($p = .007$, $t = 2.7$, $B = .256$) were positively associated with an increased in the perceived level of legitimate Body Contact. From an effects perspective, one could argue here that the general print medium provides more knowledge and contextual information about hockey and that sports television offers at least more knowledge and contextual images than general television and general television news. An possible effects (or other explanation) are very mild, however, in that the adjust R-squared value of the model was only .07.

Multiple regression analyses of the Injury and Game Object factors did not yield anything meaningful and neither of the adjusted R-squared values exceeded .12. Yet overall, these new findings support the general principles of the Media Dependency Hypothesis and the argument that different media (print vs. television) and different programming (general vs. specific) have significantly different effects (or at the very least attract significantly different users).

Implications of the Findings

The findings presented herein have implications for communication theory as well as a number of practical applications.

Communication theory. From a heuristic standpoint, the generally positive findings of this study support the use of this theoretical model in investigating more serious media effects issues. For example, the combination of media dependency, group identity and media use may prove a useful tool in examining possible media effects in such areas as media representations of minorities, politicians and other social issues. While the subject of sports violence has taken on added import in recent years, the perception of hockey violence is certainly not a socially loaded topic. The findings, in a somewhat benign subject area, increase the potential significance and validity of the overall theoretical foundations. The model of this and other similar studies can be utilized with a growing degree of confidence in examining the mass communicating process.

Practical applications. In addition to the heuristic value of this study supporting the Media Dependency Hypothesis, there are also implications for those involved in professional hockey marketing and public communication. First, the second hypothesis' finding that hockey fans perceive significantly less violence in the sport than non-fans seems to indicate that violence is a legitimate contributing factor in the sport's lack of popularity. In terms of marketing the game to potential fans, however, it should be understood that the *perceptual* level of hockey violence is separate and distinct from any *actual* level of violence. So in designing campaigns attempting to increase the sport's popularity, hockey marketers should consider the reduction of the perceptual level of violence as being equally important as the reduction of actual game violence. The Media Dependency model and the results of this study would indicate that the perceived level of violence can be reduced among non-fans by increasing direct social contact with the game, its players and existing fans. This concept should be taken into account when designing public communication and marketing campaigns.

This study's overall model also tends to support the National Hockey League's claim that the general television and news media highlight and over-emphasize the games' inherent brutal body contact — and that body contact tends to be interpreted by non-fans as illegitimate borderline violence. The resulting stereotype has perhaps become a stumbling block in attracting new fans. Yet as long as there is at least one fight or injurious check on any given night — from any N.H.L. city — the violent highlight will make its way onto the late night news' sports segment. The fact of the matter remains that fighting will probably never be completely eliminated from the game and sportscasters will continue to classify fighting and injuries as newsworthy reporting. So while fans seek out and receive information such as game scores in these reports, non-fans — who tend to be media dependent — receive information that tends to increase the perception of the game as a sport fraught with violence (Emotion factor) and illegitimate body contact (Body Contact factor). The medium and programming serve different purposes — and thus have different effects — for different viewers.

Perhaps reducing the coverage of hockey's inherent roughness can be accomplished through educating sports anchors and news editors about the rules, context and traditions of the game. This may be an important direction to take because television reporters tend to be generalists while newspaper reporters tend to be specialists who write exclusively about hockey. If television news could somehow provide hockey information more similar to newspaper reports, the perceived level of violence might be reduced.

Limitations of the Study

The generalizibility, reliability and validity of the results and conclusions drawn from this study are affected by several weaknesses. First, a broader, random sample that better reflected the overall ethnic and economic makeup of the United States would provide more generalizable results. While this could be said for any study, the university sample was perhaps from too high a socioeconomic group, and the magazine sample composed of ultra, hard-core fans. For example, the target audience of the publication sample was composed primarily of amateur players. Perhaps this type of fan's perception of hockey violence is significantly different from that of the non-playing hockey fan.

In the area of reliability, the time constraint that the student sample was under was also a concern. Those students who took the survey at the beginning of a class period had a teacher anxiously awaiting to begin his or her lecture; students participating at the end of class may have seen a quickly completed survey as an opportunity to get out of class a few minutes early. It is believed that the publication sample took more time and put more thought into answering questions truthfully, while the student sample was more likely to answer questions in the extreme. In addition, there may have been an attribute effect working within the publication sample because these participants were more likely to know the survey was about ice hockey on account of their receiving the survey in an envelope identifying the hockey publication's return address along with a free helmet sticker. This may have increased the return rate but sensitized these subjects. Students participating in class, on the other hand, were simply told that the survey had to do with the mass media and sports.

Regarding validity, the greatest area of concern lies with the instrument's shotgun approach to the perception of hockey violence. For example the two items related to fighting in hockey were not even included in the Perceived Violence scale because one did not load during factor analysis and the other was an isolate. A rating of borderline violence that comprised actions outside the rules of the sport did not load during factor analysis and was excluded from the scale as well. It is believed that these items did not load because the statements regarding fighting were poorly phrased and the borderline violence rating section was too elaborate and confusing.

To alleviate this concern, these three items were included in the Perceived Violence scale, and reanalysis of all of the tests was completed. For each hypothesis, results increased in both strength and significance. So this apparent weakness perhaps served as a safeguard in the legitimacy of the results. Fighting aside, non-fans perceive more violence in the sport than fans. Some question remains, however, as to how and if media coverage of fisticuffs fit into the overall equation of the enjoyment and perception of hockey violence.

There is no question that an improved Perceived Violence index would have enhanced the validity of the results. Since it occurs within the context of a game, sports violence is perhaps even more subjective and multidimensional in nature than other forms of violence. A more appropriate method would have been a complete qualitative pretest and factor analysis of potential hockey violence dimensions, which would have then been utilized in the final survey.

Finally, as evidenced by the low adjusted R-squared values of the multiple regression tests, the communicating and perceptive processes comprise a complex set of interacting variables; a number of which were not identified or included. The role of the media in this complex system may be relatively small. It should be noted however, that the strength of the results are similar to other media dependency and effects studies. As Gerbner, Gross, Morgan and Signorielli put it when discussing Cultivation Theory, even though "observable independent contributions of television can only be relatively small... The 'size' of an 'effect' is far less critical than the direction of its steady contribution" (1980, p. 14).

Suggestions for Further Research

Existing definitions of sports violence focus on rules, reasons for participant violence, spectator behavior and cultural values. For example, Smith's definition of sports violence (1983) is based on the legitimate and illegitimate violation of game rules and criminal laws. Another definition of participant violence includes interacting variables of scoring, body contact, player retaliation and reward structure (Schneider & Eitzen, 1986). Yet where does the inherent danger of a puck or baseball traveling at upwards of 100 miles per hour fit into these definitions? The same could be said for potential injuries occurring during legitimate play. For example, rules and laws do not make auto racing a violent sport, the inherent speed and equipment involved provide the potential for violence, which may be pleasant or unpleasant to viewers. Viewers' perception of sports violence — especially in a mediated format — is separate and distinct from any alleged objective- or player-oriented definitions or measures of sports violence.

The mediated sporting experience will continue to be a major influence in the economic and cultural development of sport. Factor analysis of the Perception of Violence items seems to indicate a multi-dimensional construct composed of injuries, body contact, items used in playing the game, emotional perceptions and fighting. This study has provided some preliminary information in the development of a perception of sports violence index that could be applied to a variety of sports programming and the roles media play. Much useful research could be conducted in this area.

In terms of improving this study, it would be useful to conduct a similar study, utilizing an improved survey, with samples from the Northeastern region of the United States and Canada — where hockey is more accepted, in addition to California. An improved survey conducted with a larger and more generalizable sample would provide great insight into understanding how the perception of violence and mass media representations of the game affect the popularity of the sport.

Finally, these findings would suggest that the Media Dependency Hypothesis can be utilized with more confidence in studying the effects of other mass media representations such as minorities and other important social issues. The practical implications of these studies would be very useful in critiquing and improving our media systems.

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Conclusion

Based on the Media Dependency Hypothesis, this paper has sought to identify a relationship between how violent professional hockey is perceived to be and the way the game is portrayed in the mass media. The results seem to support the notion that the sometimes violent images and stereotypes seen in the news and mass media has a significant effect on individuals who depend more exclusively on the mass media for hockey information. There was a positive correlation found been media dependency and the perception of violence in the game, and multiple regression of perceived violence factors showed some significance as well. Results also indicate that hockey fans perceive significantly less violence in the sport than non-fans. This assumption was based on Social Identity Theory and the Selective Perception Hypothesis. Finally, some evidence was also found strengthening the argument that print and television have inherent qualities that provide significantly different information. In this case, the use of print media was negatively correlated with the perception of violence. In some instances television use was associated with an increase in that same perception.

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The Mediating Role of Public Mood: New Explorations in the Relationship Between Media Use and Political Knowledge/Attitudes

by

Ekaterina Ognianova

James Coyle

Esther Thorson

University of Missouri-Columbia

Running Head:

The Mediating Role of Public Mood

Correspondence to:
Esther Thorson
116 Walter Williams Hall
School of Journalism
University of Missouri-Columbia
P.O. Box 838
Columbia, MO 56211
tel. (314) 882-9590
fax: (314) 884-5302
Internet: jouret@mizzou1.missouri.edu

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Abstract

This study suggests that a relatively unexplored variable, public mood, might intervene in the frequently researched relationship between citizens' media use and political knowledge/political attitudes. Public mood refers to citizens' feelings about political entities, such as their state and country. First, the study examines what individual difference and media use variables predict public mood. Second, the study looks at how public mood, in turn, influences knowledge about political issues, and attitudinal responses, including levels of political cynicism and evaluations of television coverage of a political campaign and the candidates' ads. Thus, the study tests a theoretical model that outlines both the antecedent and the consequent conditions of public mood. The findings suggest that public moods are predicted by specific individual difference and media use variables. In turn, public moods predict political knowledge and cynicism but do not predict evaluations of the television coverage or of the candidates' ads.

The Mediating Role of Public Mood:
New Explorations in the Relationship
Between Media Use and Political Knowledge/Attitudes

Introduction

Media effects research has long been concerned with the relationship between media use, political knowledge, and political attitudes (e.g., Graber, 1984; Hollander, 1996; Kraus & Davis, 1978; McLeod, Kosicki, & McLeod, 1994; McLeod & Reeves, 1980; Reeves & Hawkins, 1986; Roberts & Bachen, 1981; Robinson, 1976; Robinson & Levy, 1986; Weaver & Drew, 1995). Studies have usually included media use variables as predictors of knowledge about political issues, as well as a number of dependent variables that have been implicated in the likelihood that citizens will participate in the democratic process: feelings of efficaciousness, trust in government, and political cynicism. Different methodologies, e.g., experiments vs. surveys, as well as different measures of knowledge, e.g., recall vs. recognition vs. open-ended elaborations (Graber, 1994; Gunter, 1987; McLeod et al., 1994; Neuman, 1976; Neuman, Just & Crigler, 1992; Price & Zaller, 1993; Robinson, 1972; Robinson & Levy, 1986), and different concepts and operationalizations of media use, e.g., attention to media vs. exposure (e.g., Chaffee, Zhao & Leshner, 1994; Martinelli & Chaffee, 1995; Zhao & Bleske, 1995) have led to discrepant findings about citizens' learning from the media. Other studies, investigating the relationship between media use and political cynicism or self-efficacy, have produced similarly mixed results (e.g., McKean, Leshner, Meeds & Packard, 1995; Newhagen, 1994; Robinson, 1976; Wald & Lupfer, 1978).

The present study suggests that another, relatively unexplored, variable might intervene in the relationship between citizens' media use and political knowledge/political attitudes. In a new way of looking at the relationship between media use and political knowledge and attitudes, the study examines specifically the role of citizens' feelings about political entities, such as their state and country--a construct that has been termed public mood. If public mood does play a mediating role in the relationship between media use and political knowledge/political attitudes, as suggested here, it may also account for some of past research's discrepant findings.

The study proposes a theoretical model that includes both the antecedent and the consequent conditions of public mood. First, the study examines what individual difference and media use variables predict public mood. Second, the study looks at how public mood, in turn, influences knowledge about political issues, and attitudinal responses, such as levels of political cynicism, evaluations of television coverage of a political campaign, and evaluations of the candidates' ads. The proposed model is then tested with data from a large-scale survey conducted during the 1994 election for Senate representatives in a Midwestern state. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion of the significance of the tested model and its implications for future research in the area of mass communication and society.

Before linking public mood to media use and political knowledge/attitudes, a close look at and an explication of this relatively new concept are required. Such a review gives evidence for predicting a mediating role of public mood between media use and political knowledge/attitudes.

The Construct of Public Mood

Recent developments in the political psychology literature suggest that people's feelings about political entities, such as their country or state, are related both to media influence and political attitudes. In general, mood is a long-term positive or negative feeling that does not have the intense peaks usually associated with emotion and is not traceable to a specific source (e.g., Clore, Schwarz, & Conway, 1993; Fiske & Taylor, 1991). People's feelings about their political environment have been integrated in the concept of public mood. Public mood is defined as a "diffuse affective state, having distinct positive and negative components, that people experience because of their membership in a particular political community" (Rahn, Kroeger, & Kite, in press, p. 4).

A way to understand the concept of public mood is to compare it to the feelings people have as members of social groups. Public mood is a subset of what psychologists refer to as "social emotion." If people have certain feelings as members of particular social groups, they should experience similar feelings as members of political communities. Rahn's research (Clore & Rahn, 1994; Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press) gives examples of such public feelings: the feeling that most Americans experience when a fellow American wins the Olympics, after the death of a public figure, who has represented the nation as whole, or during periods of perceived threats to national security. In explaining the construct of public mood, Rahn refers to Katz's (1965) work that has suggested two levels at which people function as members of a [political] system. Katz (p. 361) has written that: "At the one level they [people] are tied into the structure through their emotional investment in system symbols.... At another level people are integrated into the system through their functional interdependence in their everyday activities and their empirically oriented beliefs about these interdependent activities." As can be seen from the quote, both of these levels have affective dimensions.

If one's private mood is dependent on physiological, cognitive (such as memory of experiences; e.g., Simon, 1982), and environmental factors, public mood is narrowly experienced as a function of one's membership in a political community (Clore & Rahn, 1994; Kite & Rahn, 1995; Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press). Public mood cannot be dependent on physiological factors, although it might be possible to measure by autonomic responses as private mood often is. It is logical that one's private and public moods are related because a person's mood may affect his or her feelings about the political community; and vice versa, a positive or negative mood about the political community may affect one's private mood. Rahn and Clore (1994) have shown that private mood is one of public mood's short-term causes.

Although private and public moods are necessarily related, it has also been argued that it is useful to analyze them separately as two different concepts (Clore & Rahn, 1994; Rahn & Clore, 1994). Public mood is experienced in different context from that, which stimulates personal feelings. Although an individual may not distinguish between the two different feelings associated with one's personal life and one's political environment, they are driven by different forces and may produce different effects. For example, while personal mood is mostly determined by one's interpersonal relations, public mood is a product of indirect, imaginary ties with a political community. Nevertheless, Rahn writes that the "phenomenology of mood is the same regardless" (Clore & Rahn, 1994, p. 5; Rahn & Clore, 1994, p. 2), which allows predictions about causes and effects of public mood based on what is known about private mood.

The construct of public mood has been found to have the structure of two distinct, but correlated factors, labeled positive and negative public mood (Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press). This distinction is common in the literature on theories of affect, whether the factors are termed positive and negative affect, or something else. For example, Mano (1990) has also found support for a two-factor structure of affective states, consisting of pleasantness and arousal. In Rahn 's research, positive public mood is usually measured by respondents' agreement with statements that they feel happy, proud, hopeful, and secure when thinking about their country. Similarly, negative public mood is measured by respondents' agreement with statements that they feel angry, afraid, sad, and frustrated when thinking about their country.

Predictors and Effects of Public Mood--A Model and Six Hypotheses

Mood as a Mediating Variable

Personal (or what is called here private) mood is an important mediating variable in several fields of research, such as social cognition, marketing, persuasion. For example, in consumer behavior research, Gardner (Gardner, 1985; Gardner and Vandersteel, 1984) has explored mood as a situational variable. She has summarized both the influence of a consumer's mood on product satisfaction and the influence of certain marketing stimuli on a consumer's mood.

The present study views public mood as a similar situational variable that intervenes between such traditional predictor variables as demographics and media use/exposure and political knowledge and attitude. First, possible predictors of public mood will be examined. After that the study will turn to an examination of possible effects of public mood.

Predictors of Public Mood

Public mood is complex construct that has the characteristics of both a state and a trait (Kite & Rahn, 1995). That is, public mood may vary between individuals, depending on their personal traits, as well as within individuals, depending on external stimuli. In a conceptual map that outlines "the etiology of public mood," Rahn and Clore (1994, Figure 1) suggest four types of causes of public mood. These include: *individual/personal causes*, which can be *short-term* (private mood and personal experiences, such as political participation, personal economic situation, personal dealings with government, crime) and *long-term* (demographic causes, such as gender, ethnicity/race, income, age, education; and psychological causes, such as one's personality or satisfaction with life); and *collective/political causes*, which can also be *short-term* (mediated public events; political advertising; sociotropic evaluations; such as of the state of the national economy, crime, public schools; job performance or political leaders; dissatisfaction with policy) and *long-term* (national identity, patriotism, partisanship, and ideology). Although media are not explicitly specified in this map, they obviously fall among the short-term collective/political causes, together with mediated public events and political advertising. The present study focuses on three types of predictors of public mood: demographics (personal long-term), partisanship, political ideology, political involvement (political long-term), and media (political short-term).

Individual Differences as Predictors of Public Mood

In analyses of the predictors and effects of public mood toward the United States, Rahn and her associates (Rahn et al., in press; Rahn & Clore, 1994) found that positive and negative moods were not significantly predicted by age. However, gender was consistently a significant predictor of public mood, with males reporting less negative mood in several surveys in the United States and one in Sweden (Kite and Rahn, 1995; Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press). Membership in the Republican party was consistently a significant predictor of positive mood, but not of negative mood (Rahn and Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press). Being to the right of the ideological spectrum predicted positive mood in surveys in the Untied States and in Sweden (Kite & Rahn, 1995). In other studies, education and race were also significant predictors, with more educated people (Rahn et al., in press) and non-white Americans (Rahn & Clore, 1994) reporting more positive public mood. Income was also a significant predictor in one study (Kite & Rahn, 1995), with higher income predicting positive public mood.

Based on this previous research, in testing the predictors of public moods in the present survey, it is expected that:

H1: Individual difference variables, such as gender, education, race, income, age, party identification, political ideology, and being registered to vote will be associated with citizens' moods about their state and country.

Media Predictors of Public Mood

Rahn & Clore (1994, p. 25) have suggested that "the sorts of factors that contribute to positive affect, such as patriotism, national identity centrality, and social trust, are slowly being eroded by ... perhaps the pervasive influence of television." Of the possible media use predictors of public moods, only the effects of exposure to negative and positive political advertising have been investigated. Broder (1995, p. 4A) has noted in an editorial on political advertising that, "Negative campaigning is rarely pretty. Sometimes it doesn't feel good either." This intuitive statement touches on the possibility that political advertising is related to people's affect. The expectation was supported by Rahn and Hirshorn's (1995) research. They conducted an experiment presenting negative or positive ads to children (age 8 through 13) and measuring their public and private moods afterwards. Children exposed to positive ads reported feeling significantly more happy, less sad, and less angry about their country. These children's private moods were also more positive. Children in the negative ads condition experienced the reverse effects. Furthermore, after regressing the children's pre-test public mood and tone of the ads on the post-test public mood, the authors found a significant effect of the ads' tone on the post-test public mood. They concluded that, "while public mood has considerable inertia, it can be influenced by the tone of political advertising" (Rahn & Hirshorn, 1995, p. 11). None of the demographic variables, such as age, gender, political knowledge, or race was a significant predictor of the post-test public mood. Thus, Rahn and Hirshorn's study provides strong evidence of a relationship between tone of political advertising and public mood.

In addition, Thorson, Ognianova, Coyle and Denton (1995) found in survey research that negative political advertising was strongly related to increased negative public moods and decreased positive public moods. Even after the effects of demographic and media use variables were removed, self-reported exposure to negative ads was associated with increased negative mood about the state and with decreased positive mood about the state, the country, the gubernatorial and the Senate races in a Midwestern state in 1994. Self-reported exposure to positive ads was correlated only with decreased negative mood about the Senate race.

Based on these findings and rationale, this study predicts that:

H2: Media use variables will be associated with positive and negative public moods.

Effects of Public Mood

Effects of Public Moods on Political Knowledge--Lessons From Negative Political Advertising

Because public mood is such a new theoretical construct, the effects of public mood on political knowledge have not been examined yet. However, a prediction about the effect of public mood on political knowledge is possible, based on findings about private mood and information processing, as well as research on the effects of negative political advertising on memory. In general, mood states have been shown to intervene in the relationship between information encoding and processing. This is relevant to the present context of encoding political information from the media and retrieving it as political knowledge. If private mood aids recall, then public mood, provided that it is influenced by the media, should be related to political knowledge gained from the media.

In addition, research on negative political advertising has found an association between exposure to negative ads and memory for the content of the ads. For example, Garramone (1984) found that almost 60% of survey respondents recalled information from and about negative ads to which they had been exposed. In a study by Faber and Storey (1984), 19% of the ads respondents were able to recall in a free recall test were negative in valence. The general rationale for these findings is that humans are prone to attend to negative stimuli more so than to positive stimuli--for protection and control over the environment. Newhagen and Reeves (1991, p. 203) hypothesized that "negative messages should elicit psychological states that enhance encoding and information processing" and thus, positively affect memory. In an experiment with adults from a California community, they measured reaction time and accuracy for video and audio recognition of political ads aired during the Bush-Dukakis (1988) and Senate races. The hypothesis was supported: reaction time was the shortest and accuracy was best for ads that were truly negative in genre. Similarly, Lang (1991) found a main effect for emotion on memory with negative commercials being recalled significantly better than positive commercials in both free and cued recall tests. Based on these findings, the present study predicts that:

H3: Negative public moods will be positively associated with levels of political knowledge.

Effects of Public Mood on Political Attitudes

The role of emotion in political attitudes, judgments, and behavior has long been explored in political psychology (e.g., Masters & Sullivan, 1993; Ottati & Wyer, Jr., 1993). Rahn's research has also tested the constructs of positive and negative public mood as predictors of social and political judgments. Rahn et al. (in press) found that positive mood was a significant predictor of collective efficacy, and negative mood was a significant predictor of expectations of international threat. Clore and Rahn (1994) found that negative public mood was causally related to decreased trust in government and positive public mood was causally related to increased political efficacy. In addition, Rahn and Hirshorn (1995) observed that the children in their experiment exhibited a positive association between positive public mood and trust in government. In general, such political attitudes and judgments as trust in government and political efficacy are inversely associated with political cynicism (e.g., Aager, Goldstein, & Pearl, 1971; Fraser, 1971; Rodgers, 1974). Political efficacy, for example, is usually defined with the question "Does my vote count?" (Newhagen, 1994, p. 367). The presence and level of political cynicism logically determines the answer to this question. Based on this, the present study also predicts hat:

H4: Positive public moods will be negatively associated with political cynicism. Negative public moods will be positively associated with political cynicism.

Effects of Public Mood on Media Evaluations

Finally, this study predicts that public moods would be significantly associated with evaluations of the television coverage of the campaign and the political ads used in it. This expectation is based on findings that personal mood has effects on judgment, inference and decision-making and persuasion (Bower, 1991; Srull, 1984). Schwarz and Clore (1983, p. 513) have referred to the "informative and directional functions" of mood. Generally, people in a good mood make favorable judgments and evaluations (Forgas & Bower, 1987; Isen & Shalker, 1982; Isen, 1983; Srull, 1983). People in a positive mood make positive judgments about their self-efficacy (Kavanaugh & Bower, 1985), their environment (Schwarz et al., 1987), self-reported happiness and satisfaction with their lives (Schwarz & Clore, 1983), and, finally, about politics (Clark & Williamson, 1989; Mayer, 1986). Similarly, consumer psychology research has found that positive mood leads to product satisfaction (Gardner & Vandersteel, 1984). Further, positive mood decreases perceptions of potential risk and worry (Johnson & Tversky, 1983). Persuasion studies have also found that people in a positive mood are more susceptible to persuasive messages, while those in a negative mood are more resistant (e.g. Dribben & Brabender, 1979; Goldberg & Gorn, 1987; Krugman, 1983; Mackie & Worth, 1991; McGuire, 1985; Milberg & Clark, 1988; Petty, Cacioppo, & Kasmer 1988; Razran, 1940; Schwarz, & Bless, 1991). These findings should also translate in the context of public mood. Therefore, this study's predictions include:

H5: Positive public moods will be positively associated with evaluations of political ads and negative public moods will be negatively associated with evaluations of political ads.

H6: Positive public moods will be positively associated with evaluations of the television coverage of the campaign and negative public moods will be negatively associated with evaluations of the television coverage of the campaign.

Method

The model and six hypotheses articulated above were tested in a survey of a Midwestern state's residents in the fall of 1994. A 64-item phone questionnaire was administered to 400 adults by a professional survey research company. The respondents were selected by random digit dialing for a representative sample. The interviews were conducted two months before the election, between September 15 and September 25, 1994. There was a 55% response rate, and the demographic profile of the sample closely matched that of the state. Table 1 compares the demographics of the 1991 state census with the demographics of the sample. As can be seen, the sample had a slightly higher distribution of females and higher-income households than the whole county. Over-representation of females and higher incomes is a common feature of phone surveys due to the greater likelihood of having a telephone.

Table 2 shows the items that were used to measure each variable of interest in this study. The individual difference variables included: age, gender, race, income level, education level, political ideology, party affiliation, and whether respondents were registered to vote. Table 1 shows the distribution of age, gender, race, and income. In contrast to national figures that reflect low voter registration, 89% of the respondents in the survey said they had registered to vote.

Media use for political information was measured by asking respondents to indicate how often they get information about politics and government from seven different sources: television news, newspapers, radio, magazines, candidate advertising, candidate speeches or literature, and word-of-mouth. The response options for each source were "always, sometimes, rarely, never." In addition, respondents were asked how often they watch local television news for general information, with response options including "several times a week, a few times a week, less often than that, and never."

The mood questions were based on the work of Rahn and her colleagues (Clore & Rahn, 1994; Kite & Rahn, 1995; Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press). There were two topics in which mood was queried: the state and the U.S. For each of these topics, people were asked, "When you think about (the state of ..., the United States), how frequently do you feel: positive mood (happy, proud, hopeful, secure), negative mood (afraid, sad, frustrated, angry). The response categories were "never, sometimes, almost always, and always." The positive and negative mood variables were intermixed in the questionnaire, so there would be no obvious patterns.

The items were factor-analyzed separately for the state and the U.S. and these results are shown in Table 3. As observed in studies by Rahn and her associates (Clore & Rahn, 1994; Kite & Rahn, 1995; Rahn & Clore, 1994; Rahn et al., in press) the construct of public mood had two correlated, but distinct, factors. A factor analysis with a principal components method of extraction and an oblique rotation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989, Ch. 12) yielded two factors, distinctly grouping the positive and negative items for both the state and the U.S. public mood items. This analysis determined four public mood variables: positive mood about the state, negative mood about the state, positive mood about the U.S., and negative mood about the U.S. to be used in further analyses that would test the study's hypotheses. Each of the four separate scales was internally consistent, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .76 for positive mood about the state, .64 for negative mood about the state, .78 for positive mood about the U.S., and .81 for negative mood about the U.S. As could be expected, the positive and negative factors were inversely related: the correlations were -.42 and -.46 ($p<.01$) between positive and negative mood about the state and positive and negative mood about the U.S., respectively.

Political knowledge was measured by asking respondents six questions testing their levels of knowledge about the Senate race. Four questions asked respondents to identify the state's Democrat and Republican candidates for Senate representatives and recall what office each of them held at the time of the election. The fifth question asked respondents to identify which of the two candidates supported a particular issue, such as a limit on the number of terms a member of Congress can serve. The sixth question tested respondents' knowledge of a proposed amendment to the state constitution by giving statements summarizing it and asking respondents to agree with the one they thought was correct (a multiple choice recognition task). For the answer to each question, every respondent was given a score of 0 (wrong answer) or 1 (right answer). The scores were summed, yielding a total knowledge score ranging from 0 to 6. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the knowledge scale was .85, indicating that it was a satisfactorily consistent measure.

Levels of political cynicism were measured with an index of four items adopted from the Times Mirror Center questions that have been employed for many years (e.g., Times Mirror Center Report, October, 1994). Respondents were asked to indicate their strong agreement, agreement, disagreement, or strong disagreement with the following statements: "Politicians really try to represent the interests of the people," "Politicians are all alike," "Politicians are honorable people who are dedicated to public service," and "Politicians' votes are for sale to the highest bidder." Items 1 and 3 were reversed so a high score indicated high level of political cynicism. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .72.

Finally, respondents were asked about their evaluations of the political ads and the TV news coverage of the Senate campaign that they had seen. The survey included questions about whether the respondents found candidates' commercials and the TV news coverage of the U.S. Senate campaign "interesting, informative, accurate, relevant." The four items for each source (ads and TV news) were summed, thus yielding a score from 0 to 4 for each respondent. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .77 and .72 for the respondents' evaluations of the political ads and of the TV news coverage of the campaign, respectively.

Results

Usually, a theoretical model as the one outlined in Figure 1 is tested by structural equation analysis, including path analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, or latent variable models, which allow the simultaneous testing of predictions shown in the model (e.g., Loehlin, 1992). In this study, however, the model was quite complicated (though realistic) to be subjected to simultaneous testing of the hypotheses. A more appropriate test was a series of multiple regression analyses, used to test each hypothesis individually. The use of this analysis was determined by the flexible and causally explanatory nature of multiple regression analysis, which is also the basis of structural equation modeling (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Hypothesis 1 suggested that individual difference variables, such as age, gender, education, race, income, party identification, political ideology, and being registered to vote would predict citizens' moods about their state and country. Four series of multiple regressions included the individual difference variables as predictors and positive mood about the state, negative mood about the state, positive mood about the U.S., and negative mood about the U.S. as dependent variables in each regression. Table 4 shows the results of these analyses.

As predicted (although not found in Rahn's research), age was significantly associated with positive mood about the state. Older people were more likely to have positive feelings about the state. Income was also significantly associated with positive mood about the state, with wealthier people feeling more positive about the state. Education level, on the other hand, had an inverse relationship with positive mood about the state. More educated people indicated feeling less positive and more negative about the state. Race was also a significant predictor of negative mood about the state, with minorities more likely to report negative moods about the state. The latter two results contradict earlier findings by Rahn and Clore (1994) and Rahn et al. (in press).

In addition, this study's findings contradict Rahn's consistent earlier findings of membership in the Republican party as a significant predictor of positive public mood. In the present study, although party membership was also a significant predictor of mood about the U.S., the direction was the opposite: Independents, Independents leaning Republican, and Republicans were more likely to indicate a negative mood about the U.S. than Democrats and Independents leaning Democrat.

Finally, gender approached significance in predicting positive and negative moods about the U.S., where males were more positive and females were more negative about the U.S. Being registered to vote was not significantly associated with any of the public mood scales. Overall, individual difference variables predicted each one of the public mood items. Thus, H1 was supported.

H2 suggested that the use of certain media would predict positive and negative public moods. Use of television news and newspapers for political information significantly predicted positive mood about the U.S. The more people reported using these media for political information, the more positive they felt about the U.S. In addition, radio approached significance in positively predicting positive mood about the U.S. Political information gathered through word-of-mouth communication was a positive significant predictor of negative mood about the U.S. The more people reported using word-of-mouth communication for political information, the more negative they felt about the U.S. Use of candidates' speeches or literature for political information approached significance in positively predicting negative mood about the U.S. Finally, three variables, use of newspapers, candidates' speeches or literature, and word-of-mouth communication for political information, approached significance in positively predicting positive mood about the state. Therefore, H2 was supported. Table 5 shows these findings.

The effects of public moods were tested in separate multiple regression analyses where each of the public mood scales was an independent variable and the dependent variables were political knowledge, political cynicism, and evaluations of the television coverage of the campaign and the ads used in it, respectively. Hypothesis 3 suggested that negative public moods would be positively associated with levels of political knowledge. As shown in Table 6, negative mood about the U.S. was a significant predictor of political knowledge--the more negative people felt about the U.S., the more they knew about politics. Hypothesis 3 then, was supported.

Hypothesis 4 suggested that positive public moods would be negatively associated with political cynicism and vice versa, negative public moods would be positively associated with political cynicism. As can be seen in Table 6, there was clear support for this hypothesis. Negative public mood about the U.S. was a significant positive predictor of political cynicism. Positive public mood about the state was a significant negative predictor of political cynicism.

Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6 suggested that positive public moods would be positively associated with evaluations of the political ads and the television coverage of the campaign and, vice versa, negative public moods would be negatively associated with evaluations of the political ads and the television coverage of the campaign. Neither of these hypotheses were supported in the present study. Although the results were in the hypothesized directions (with positive signs of the unstandardized beta weights for both positive moods about the state and the U.S. and with negative signs for negative mood about the U.S.), the probability levels did not indicate significance.

Discussion

This study shows the importance of public mood on political knowledge and attitudes. It is the first study to test the mediating role of public mood in the relationship between demographics and media use and political knowledge and attitudes. The study goes beyond the typical measuring of media effects on political knowledge and cynicism by including in the equation the mediating role of citizens' feelings about their state and country.

As was hypothesized, public moods were predicted by specific individual difference variables such as age, education and income. This is a very important finding because it suggests that people in fact start out with different feelings about their state and country, that is, public mood can indeed be a trait.

Another important finding was that the use of both television news and newspapers for political and general information predicted positive public moods. This argues against the notion that media make people feel bad and cynical, the so-called "video malaise" hypothesis (Robinson, 1976). This study finds exactly the opposite, that exposure to specific media is positively related to public moods. Interestingly, these findings also contradict earlier evidence that newspaper readers tend to be more negative in general (e.g., Thorson, Meeds, Ognianova, Donnell, Jr., and Jackson-Thompson, 1995). Media use's apparent positive relationship with public mood also challenges the argument that the press is "a generation of vipers," and that they "hold causal disdain" for everything political (Starobin, 1995).

In addition, the present study found that public mood enhances citizens' ability to learn new information. This supports social cognition research that mood states can influence encoding, processing, and retrieval of information.

Finally, this study found that mood also affects citizens' levels of political cynicism. The more negative people felt about their state and country, the more cynical they were about politics. This supports earlier research on effects of public mood, e.g. Rahn and Clore's 1994 finding that negative public mood predicted decreased trust in government and positive public mood was causally related to increased political efficacy, Rahn and Hirshorn's 1995 finding that positive moods were associated with trust in government, and Thorson, Ognianova, Coyle, and Denton's 1995 finding that negative moods predicted political cynicism.

As with any study, certain caveats need to be noted. One limitation to making causal explanations confidently is that the method used in this study was a survey, which cannot control for all potential confounding variables. The theoretical model of public mood as a mediator between media use and political knowledge/attitudes proposed here needs to be further examined in a laboratory setting, with a greater control over extraneous variables and a less ambiguous possibility for findings causal relationships. Another limitation to the study is that public mood was measured early in the campaign. It would have been interesting to see if and how public mood changed immediately before or after the election. It is possible that with the onslaught of more advertising, much of it negative, that tends to occur as an election nears, people's public mood would have been more negative. Therefore we suggest that in future research public mood is measured at least twice--before and after the election--to observe any meaningful changes that may be due to intense negative campaigning.

Nevertheless, the present study sheds more light on the relationship between individual difference/media use variables and political knowledge/attitudes. Public mood, as a mediating variable, has a lot of explanatory power. It is logically related to individual difference variables and media consumption, and, in turn, affects attitudes related to the likelihood that citizens will participate in the democratic process. The study of public mood offers valuable and previously unforeseen insights into the relationship among media, the public, and politics. Understanding the role of public mood in mass communication and society has rich theoretical and practical implications for the democratic process.

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Table 1
Distribution of Demographic Variables: Comparison between the Survey Sample and the 1990 State Census

	Sample	Census
Age:		
18-20	4%	5%
21-24	7%	6%
25-44	44%	31%
45-54	15%	10%
55-59	6%	5%
60-64	6%	5%
65-74	11%	8%
75-84	7%	5%
85 and over	1%	2%
Sex:		
Female	59%	52%
Male	42%	48%
Race:		
White	93%	87%
African American	4%	11%
American Indian	1%	1%
Asian & Pacific	1%	1%
Hispanic	1%	1%
Other	1%	1%
Income:		
<15,000		38%
15,000--24,999		21%
25,000--49,999		26%
50,000+		16%

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. In the case of age, people under 18 years were not included in the sample, but were included in the Census.

The categories for income in the survey were different from the above, which precludes direct comparison. For reference purposes, however, here is the distribution of household income for the survey sample:

<10,000	9.8%
10,000 to less than 20,000	19.8%
20,000 to less than 30,000	23,6%
30,000 to less than 50,000	26.3%
50,000+	20.6%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1990). *1990 census of population and housing: Summary population and housing characteristics: Missouri*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1-142; U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990). *1990 census of population and housing: Summary social, economic and housing characteristics: Missouri*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 60; CACI Marketing System (1994). *The sourcebook of zip code demographics*. Arlington, VA: CACI Marketing Systems, p. 175-c.

Table 2
Independent and Dependent Variables

Individual difference variables

Age
Gender
Education
Income
Party Affiliation
Ethnicity
Registered voter
Political ideology

Media use variables

How often do you get information about politics and government from:

- Television news
- Radio
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Candidate advertising
- Candidate speeches or literature
- Word-of-mouth

Response categories: Always, Sometimes, Rarely, Never.

How often do you normally watch local TV news?

Response categories: Several times a week, A few times a week, Less often than that, Never.

Measures of public mood

When you think about Missouri, how frequently do you feel:

- Happy
- Angry
- Proud
- Afraid
- Sad
- Hopeful
- Frustrated
- Secure

Table 2 Continued

Response categories: Never, Sometimes, Almost Always, Always.
Positive mood about the state: happy, proud, hopeful, secure. Cronbach's alpha=.76
Negative mood about the state: angry, afraid, sad, frustrated. Cronbach's alpha=.64
Positive and negative moods about the state correlation r=-.42 (p<.01)

When you think about the United States, how frequently do you feel:

Happy
Angry
Proud
Afraid
Sad
Hopeful
Frustrated
Secure

Response categories: Never, Sometimes, Almost Always, Always.
Positive mood about the U.S.: happy, proud, hopeful, secure. Cronbach's alpha=.78
Negative mood about the U.S.: angry, afraid, sad, frustrated. Cronbach's alpha=.81
Positive and negative moods about the U.S. correlation r=-.46 (p<.01)

Measures of political knowledge

Knowledge of Democratic nominee's name.

Knowledge of Democratic nominee's current political office.

Knowledge of Republican nominee's name.

Knowledge of Republican nominee's most recent political office.

Knowledge of nominee who favored a limit on the number of terms a member of Congress can serve.

Knowledge of specific Amendment on ballot. (Respondents were given three possible descriptions of the Amendment and were asked to choose the best description.)

Cronbach's alpha=.85

Measures of political cynicism

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Politicians really try to represent the interests of the people.
Politicians are all alike.
Politicians are honorable people who are dedicated to public service.

Table 2 Continued

Politicians' votes are for sale to the highest bidder.

Response categories: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.

Cronbach's alpha=.72

Measures of evaluation of political ads

In general, would you say the candidates' commercials have or have not been:
Interesting
Informative
Accurate
Relevant

Response categories: Have been, Have not.
Cronbach's alpha=.77

Measures of evaluation of TV news coverage of the Senate campaign

---

In general, would you say television news coverage of the U.S. senate campaign in (name of state) has or has not been:
Interesting
Informative
Accurate
Relevant

Response categories: Has been, Has not.
Cronbach's alpha=.72

Table 3

Factor loadings, communalities (h^2), percentages of variance explained, and eigenvalues for principal components extraction and oblique rotation of the public mood items[a]

Item	About the State			About the U.S.		
	F1 (positive mood)	F2 (negative mood)	h^2	F1 (positive mood)	F2 (negative mood)	h^2
Happy	.76	—	.63	.69	—	.66
Proud	.87	—	.71	.85	—	.69
Hopeful	.72	—	.48	.77	—	.53
Secure	.64	—	.51	.71	—	.65
Angry	—	.42	.39	—	.77	.64
Afraid	—	.80	.58	—	.80	.63
Sad	—	.79	.62	—	.79	.61
Frustrated	—	.50	.48	—	.79	.63
Percent variance explained	39.50	15.50		46.00	17.00	
Eigenvalue	3.16	1.24		3.68	1.36	

[a] Factor loadings above .30 are reported.

Figure 1
Theoretical Model of Mood as a Mediator Between Individual Differences/Media Use and Political Knowledge/Attitudes

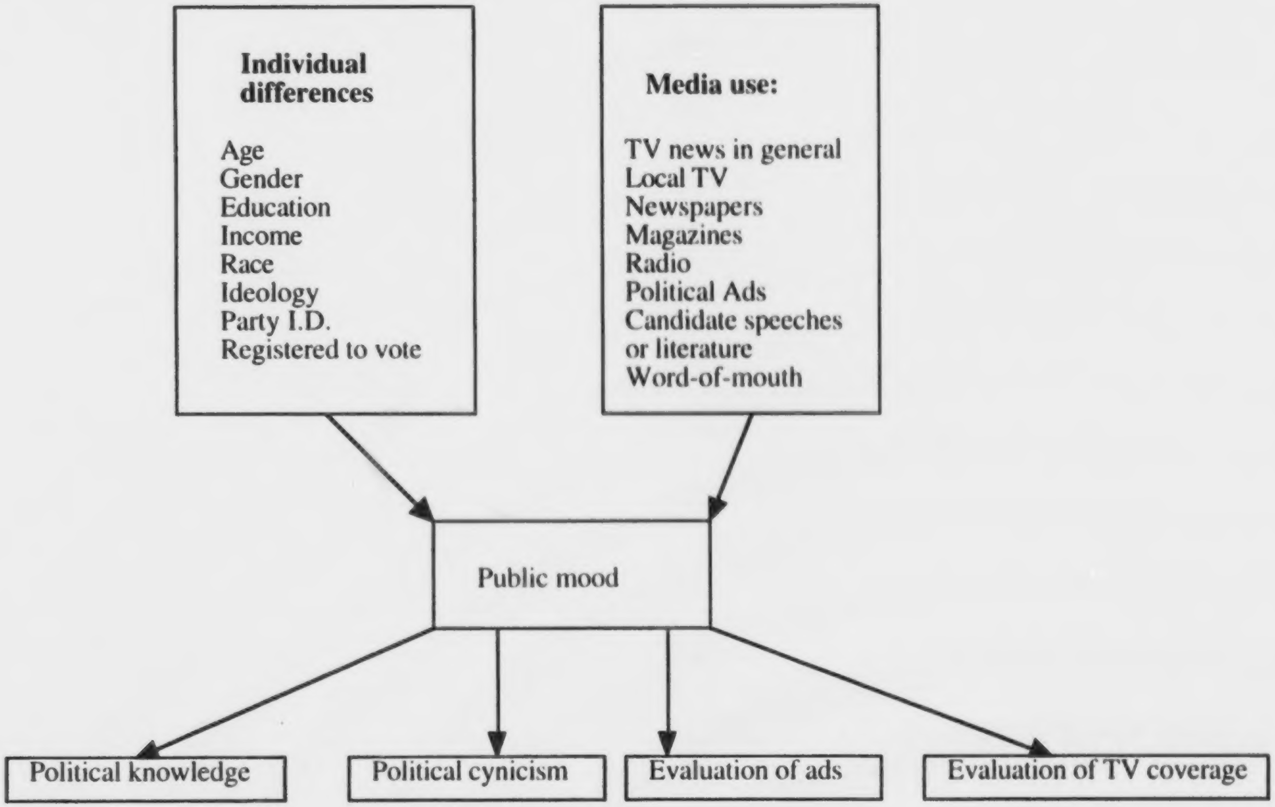
Individual differences
Age
Gender
Education
Income
Race
Ideology
Party I.D.
Registered to vote
Media use:
TV news in general
Local TV
Newspapers
Magazines
Radio
Political Ads
Candidate speeches or literature
Word-of-mouth
Public mood
Political knowledge
Political cynicism
Evaluation of ads
Evaluation of TV coverage

Table 4

Public Moods by Individual Difference Variables (Cell entries are unstandardized beta weights.)

	Dependent Variable			
Predictors	Positive mood about the state	Negative mood about the state	Positive mood about the U.S.	Negative mood about the U.S.
Age	.09*	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Education level	-.07*	.04[a]	-.07*	n.s.
Income	.08**	.04[a]	n.s.	n.s.
Race	n.s.	.09*	n.s.	n.s.
Party ID	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	.09***
Gender	n.s.	n.s.	-.13[a]	.08[a]
Ideology	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Registered to vote	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
R-squared	.038	.021	.027	.035

[a] p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; otherwise variables not significant (n.s.)

Gender (0=male; 1=female)
Race (1=White, 2=Latino, 3=African American, 4=Asian American, 5=American Indian, 6=Other)
Party ID (1=Democrat, 2=Independent but leaning Democrat, 3=Independent, 4=Independent but leaning Republican, 5=Republican, 6=Another party)
Ideology (1=Liberal, 2=Middle of the road, 3=Conservative)

Table 5

Public Moods by Media Use Variables (Cell entries are unstandardized beta weights.)

Predictors	Dependent Variable			
	Positive mood about the state	Negative mood about the state	Positive mood about the U.S.	Negative mood about the U.S.
Newspaper	.08[a]	n.s	.10*	n.s
Radio	n.s.	n.s.	.07[a]	n.s.
Candidate speeches	.07[a]	n.s.	n.s.	.06[a]
Magazines	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
TV news	n.s.	n.s.	.12*	n.s.
Local TV news	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Ads	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Word-of-mouth	.07[a]	n.s.	n.s.	.07*
R-squared	.043	-.017	.042	.004

[a] p<.10; *p<.05; otherwise variables not significant (n.s.)

Table 6

Political Knowledge and Political Cynicism by Public Moods (Cell entries are unstandardized beta weights.)

	Dependent Variable	
Predictors	Political Knowledge	Political Cynicism
Positive mood about the state	n.s.	-.95***
Negative mood about the state	n.s.	n.s.
Positive mood about the U.S.	n.s.	n.s.
Negative mood about the U.S.	.42*	.87***
R-squared	.01	.11

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001; otherwise variables not significant (n.s.)

Finding the Smoking Gun:

Local Media and Community Ties

Debra Merskin
Assistant Professor
School of Journalism & Communication
University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1275
Phone: (541) 346-4189
Email: dmerskin@darkwing.uoregon.edu

&

Mara Huberlie
Graduate Student
S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication
Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13204

Finding the Smoking Gun:

Local Media and Community Ties

Abstract

Local news media and the communities they serve have enjoyed, for the most part, a symbiotic relationship. This paper presents the findings of a content analysis of Pittsburgh television and newspaper stories to examine how city news is reported. Research questions addressed the roles and relationships of local media in the community and the framing of stories. The findings suggest that news and beliefs about content may vary. This study presents the historical basis for press/community relations and suggests that post-industrialized communities offer an opportunity to review predictions of media dependency theory.

Finding the Smoking Gun:
Local Media and Community Ties

> [Pittsburgh] is inhabited almost entirely by Scots and Irish who live in paltry log houses and are as dirty as in the north of Ireland, or even Scotland . . . There are in the town four attorneys, two doctors, and not a priest of any persuasion, nor church, nor chapel; so that they are likely to be damned, without benefit of clergy. . The place, I believe, will never be very considerable.
>
> -Arthur Lee, 1784 [1]

Arthur Lee's gloomy prediction of the future of Pittsburgh certainly did not hold true as the city now has a population of more than 350,000 and a metropolitan area population of more than 2 million.[2] If thoughts such as these were printed in the local newspaper today, they would be considered, at the least, inflammatory. It is likely the early inhabitants of Pittsburgh did not appreciate Lee's comments any more than present-day residents would. However, observations of everyday life and predictions about the future still make up a significant portion of daily news. Some would argue a gloom and doom perspective is very much a part of the media today.

The impetus for this local news study came from a Pittsburgh-based non-profit organization associated with city government. The organization reported that community and business leaders had expressed concerns that, rather than serving to unify the community, the media were perpetuating an anti-urban bias. In its role as the "vital link between the city's neighborhoods and the people investing in these neighborhoods" the organization performed a variety of duties, including a significant amount of public relations work. The staff members of this organization were concerned about the quality of life that was (or was not) being portrayed by the daily newspaper and local (network) television stations. Over a period of many months, neighborhood leaders had reported to the organization that the local media, instead of fulfilling basic responsibilities, were misrepresenting particular city neighborhoods in terms of stories about gangs, taxes, and poor quality schools. The following research questions, as posed by Barkin guided this study:

(1) Do the local media portray the city as initiating or leading change, or as responding to or reacting to social action?

(2) Are central city, poorer areas, and middle-class or wealthier neighborhoods depicted as separate constituencies or as reflections of one another?

(3) Are different communities infused with their own particular characteristics? Do the local media recognize these features?[3]

Background

By their very nature, industrialized American cities reflect the long and rich heritage of urbanization and modernization that is part of the fabric of the development of the country. Cities are one of the keys to "understanding processes of change within the entire nation."[4] Cities along the eastern U.S. seaboard can be viewed as microcosms of post-industrial society. Established in 1816, Pittsburgh certainly fits this profile. Known as the "iron" and "steel" city, Pittsburgh grew dramatically due to immigration, both from eastern states and abroad. The first wave of immigration to Pittsburgh occurred between 1830-1880 when the city changed from a trading to a manufacturing center. Scottish, Irish, Welsh, German, Swiss, and French citizens immigrated to Pittsburgh and helped the community develop from a frontier outpost to a commercial center. A second immigration wave occurred during the late 19th century.[5]

However, in recent years the coal, steel, and related industries have radically declined resulting in high unemployment. Viewed in reality and by reputation as a coal and steel town, in recent years Pittsburgh has tried to reinvent itself. Buildings have been renovated and incentives offered to attract businesses and residents.[6]

Despite these efforts citizens and businesses have left the area. The Pittsburgh metropolitan area suffered a population loss of nearly seven percent between 1980 and 1990. As Figure 1 shows, since the 1950s, the population has decreased.[7]

Figure 1

Pittsburgh Population

1990	1980	1970	1960	1950	1900	1850
369,879	423,960	520,089	604,332	676,806	321,616	46,601

Although ranked number 40 of the 100 most populated cities, Pittsburgh has suffered the largest percentage of population loss, placing it in fourth position behind Gary, Indiana, Newark, New Jersey, and Detroit, Michigan.[8]

Despite changes in population, one of the most enduring aspects of Pittsburgh are the distinctive residential neighborhoods and communities, of which there are more than ninety:

> Social and religious institutions, cultural and class patterns, a common history and the region's rugged typography all helped to preserve distinctiveness. Few observers could overlook the "Germanness" of Troy Hill or Elliot, the Italian character of Bloomfield an departs of East Liberty, the dominance of Poles and other Eastern Europeans in Polish Hill and parts of the South Side or the persistent Jewish influence in Squirrel Hill.[9]

Given its rich history of racial and ethnic diversity, immigration, industrialization, and urbanization, Pittsburgh represents an appropriate site for an investigation of media dependency as it relates to local news coverage. The following sections will describe the theoretical, media, and community contexts within which media use and community ties have developed. Several nineteenth century theorists anticipated industrialization and predicted that this process would have several effects on society, particularly on concepts of community. De Tocqueville, Comte, Spencer, Tönnies, LePlay, Marx, and Durkheim all investigated the impact of industrialization on social and individual life. This section will briefly review ideas of several key theorists whose work has formed the foundation of media dependency theory.[10] In particular, the work of sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies is important as he is considered by many to be the founding father of the theory of community.[11]

Theoretical Context

During the nineteenth century, the city and factory replaced the agricultural community as the predominant place of work and life for Western society. Institutions which had governed social relationships prior to this time became severely strained. According to Comte, as specialized functions grow, and ineffective social organizations fail to provide adequate linkages between people, the individual becomes isolated from others.[12] Spencer suggested that specialization is a natural, evolutionary outgrowth of industrial society and that "society undergoes continuous growth," and as it grows its parts become dissimilar.[13]

In the late nineteenth century, Tönnies developed a typology of human social ordering. Inspired by the transformation of his native Germany, Tönnies suggested that preindustrial society existed in a state of *Gemeinschaft*, or "reciprocal binding sentiment" where decision-making was based primarily on the influence of kinship and social groups.[14] This was a time of close interpersonal relationships based upon friendship and relations evident in early agricultural communities. There can also be a mental *Gemeinschaft* when people share a deep commitment to a set of beliefs or ideas. These beliefs and feelings bind people together in a socially cohesive group.

Tönnies suggested that, with the rise of industrialization, binding sentiment would be replaced by binding social contract. The qualities of this relationship would come to describe the industrial age: impersonality, anonymity, social distance, distrust, and isolation. He referred to this as *Gesellschaft*.[15] This formal construct suggests that people are obligated to one another through the promise of fulfilling some type of formal contract. It is evident that industrialized societies have moved toward a state of *Gesellschaft* and away from *Gemeinschaft*.

The transformation of American society from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* has led to changes in the sphere of communication interaction. Whereas in the community-type setting interaction is based on natural, affective bonds, in the mass society it is based on structural bonds. Durkheim referred to the two types, respectively, as 'mechanical' and 'organic' solidarity. Mechanical solidarity unites a people who are essentially alike.[16] Organic solidarity is achieved through mass communication that bridges the distance between isolated individual members of the modern complex social system. As a result, the individual in such a mass society becomes subjected to psychological isolation, reduced effective interpersonal communication, an increase in confusion and ambivalence--a state called anomie.[17]

A theory that incorporates the mass society concept is media dependency, which is defined as a "relationship in which the capacity of individuals to attain their goals is contingent upon the information resources of the media system."[18] This theory suggests that, as society becomes more complex and there are fewer traditional interpersonal routes available to individuals for solving problems, they tend to turn to the mass media for that information.

In urban-industrial societies, dissimilar populations are brought together, despite differences in ethnicity, occupational specialization, and economic class.[19] Due to this social differentiation, there is a weakening of effective word-of-mouth channels based on deeply established social ties through which people can obtain information they need in daily life. Therefore, people in these societies become dependent on mass communications for information needed to make decisions. The mass media then serve as a social glue binding isolated individuals together in the modern mass society; thus, replacing many of the traditional interpersonal means of information exchange. Whereas yesterday's citizen would rely primarily on interpersonal communication--perhaps with family, friends or neighbors over the backyard fence--today's citizen is likely to reply on more formal information channels, such as the news media.

Local news media and the communities they serve have enjoyed, for the most part, a symbiotic relationship. Each perceives itself as performing important functions. With the rise of a wide variety of forms of media, particularly electronic, messages reach members of a community more quickly and in greater abundance than ever before. Media dependency theory predicts the use of media as a source of information in the absence of more personal sources of knowledge. In modern industrialized societies the media bridge the interpretive gap in relaying information about important issues and events and individuals have come to expect a certain level of responsibility on the part of the media. At times, however, the interests of the media and the community appear to conflict, particularly as they concern issues of responsibility, community, and localism. Members of a community often look for someone or something to hold responsible for the bearing of bad tidings about crime, taxes, and other important issues. Naturally, the first impulse is to shoot the messenger.

Given the convergence of media, the term "press" in this study includes print and electronic forms. However, there are important differences in the way Americans originally came to think about newspapers and television that warrant discussion.

Media Context

As early as 1929, Park observed that communication was a "primary mechanism through which individual's maintained the collective enterprise called 'community'" and that local news is regarded as information that is needed if the individual is to operate as an effective remember of a local community.[20] Park's work on the newspaper as an integrative mechanism was very much a part of his work on the immigrant press.[21] He came to see the newspaper as a vehicle through which many of the characteristics of village life (*Gemeinschaft*) could be recreated in the city (*Gesellschaft*). Park suggested that news is a form of knowledge with its function being to "orient man and society in an actual world."[22] Lippmann question how the world outside and the pictures in our head vary, and subsequently asked, "what makes news?"[23] An act--was the answer--because that is what distinguishes it from opinion. He asked if news is a reflection of social conditions, concluding the answer was no, that the biggest restriction faced by newspapers in covering news is human interest. Lippmann also argued that the news-making process, by omitting so much background and contextual information, made it impossible for the news to be "truth".[24] Lasswell proposed that the media perform three functions in American society: (1) surveillance of the environment, (2) correlation of the parts of society responding to that environment, and (3) transmission of the social heritage.[25] Entertainment and interpersonal intermediary have since been added to this array.[26] These functions are still viewed as vital to the maintenance of the American system of government.

Merton extended the notion of community ties and integration, noting that the individual's community relationships are an antecedent for newspaper readership.[27] One view suggests that newspaper use leads to community ties and another that community ties lead to newspaper use. Stamm noted that, in the past, media other than newspapers have been ignored in examining the relationship with community ties. He cites a number of studies that have begun to ask whether community ties contribute to television viewing.[28]

Newspapers have also been cited as important tools in stimulating civic pride and beautification projects, as encouraging recycling, and for zoning projects.[29] In general, there is an expectation of boosterism, often on the part of public relations officials and information officers who may consider the local television stations to be part of a communication system designed to further their specific goals.[30] While this notion of obligation would seem to be at odds with traditional notions of "journalistic objectivity," a new type of "public" or "civic" journalism is being embraced by a number of newspapers and is modeled along this same concept. Civic journalism can be thought of as an effort on the part of journalists to make public life work by becoming involved in the process of finding solutions to community problems, rather than simply reporting them.

Although American newspapers are regarded, even in the age of absentee ownership, as local in orientation, local television stations have not been thought of in the same way.[31] However, in light of technological innovations and improvements, the vast majority of Americans get their news, especially local news, from television.[32] Rainie has noted that:

> . . . the overall effect of body-bag coverage on American culture is odious--not because it misstates what's going on in urban neighborhoods but because the impressions it leaves are processed in destructive ways.[33]

Many researchers would argue that perceptions are created by the mass media's "framing" of stories in a particular way--that is they provide contexts within which events are presented.[34] By choosing particular content, journalists, in effect, construct reality, particularly if readers or viewers are unfamiliar with a story and have no way to test its accuracy. The structure of television, which relies on brief, information-heavy presentations that lack stopping points for reference, make it difficult for viewers to process anything more than a fraction of the information.[35]

Dennis and Merrill argue that television news has justifiably been called "chewing gum for the eyes" by emphasizing trivial events that have a visual component regardless of the importance.[36] Former anchor Walter Cronkite stated that, "the locals use any old barn burning or jackknifed trailer truck, and pass that kind of thing off as news." He added that local broadcasters are delinquent in covering community news that directly affects how people live.[37] This reflects a bias toward the spectacle and misleads the public by following the visual clue to the exclusion of deeper meaning:

> Sirens bleat, bodies float, suspects cringe, victims weep. Celebrities preen and promote. Anchors chat and emote. It's local news time: normally 30 minutes of hell and blather, ads and promos, weather and sports, starting at 9, 10, or 11-local television's most profitable time of night and its most disheartening use of the air.[38]

This "if-it-bleeds-it-leads" mentality has lead many to conclude that the news media exaggerate the weird and unusual in order to make the stories more newsworthy, hence attracting more viewers, thus, attracting more advertising. In Pittsburgh, the community organization stated the following:

> . . . we are concerned that the Pittsburgh media--print, radio, and television--project an anti-urban bias in their news reporting. Neighborhood leaders tell us that the local media often create an unnecessary level of panic and pessimism as a direct result of reporting practices that are frequently inaccurate and perhaps sensationalized.

Community and Media Context

Questions associated with localism and community are at the heart of this conflict. Barkin investigated what it is about local television news, for example, that makes it local. He proposed five definitions for the community, garnered from the sociological literature, that relate to the content of news: the community as (1) a geographic unit, viewed by ratings, (2) a microcosm, the audience as a self-sufficient social system, (3) a sphere of practical knowledge--not only does television news serve as a "community billboard" for news, weather, and traffic information, the news also helps define the community as a "collectivity of people," (4) an interdependent social system--natural disasters underscore how a community is defined by its inter relatedness, and (5) the object of close personal attachments--stories that "presume or encourage loyalty toward the community or its symbolic representatives."[39] For example, local sports teams invoke ties to the "conventions and mores of a beloved place."[40]

In order to understand the communication needs of the community it is important consider how the local media define community. According to Newby:

> Community will reinforce and encapsulate a moral code, raising moral tensions and rendering heterodoxy a serious crime, for in a community everyone is known and can be placed in the social structure. This results in a personalizing of issues because familiar names and characters inevitably become associated with everything that happens.[41]

Previous Literature

An abundance of research has explored local television news. For example, several studies have explored local television news values [42] and the distinction between consonance and topic mix in news.[43] Scholars have found that the networks present few divergent perspectives [44] and that there is duplication.[45] Others have found that the networks lack consistency in news judgment.[46] Contingent factors as explanations of duplication have also been cited.[47] Recently, studies have begun exploring sensationalism in reporting.[48]

This body of literature suggests that most studies have focused on *television* news reporting. Graber suggests that researchers treat television news as if "the pictures were nonexistent and only the words mattered."[49] She adds that "purely verbal analyses not only miss the information contained in the pictures and non-verbal sounds, they even tail to interpret the verbal context appropriately because that content is modified by its combination with picture messages."[50] In addition, research has shown that audiences report visual content more accurately than verbal content, with retention rates for visual being much higher.[51] Barkin cautions that item counts, whether verbal or visual, can be misleading for they render the text as no more than the sum of its parts.[52]

Scholarly studies of local media and communities are limited.[53] Studies have looked at the the issue of "sensitivity" in presentation of local news[54] and local media watchdog organizations (such as the Rocky Mountain Media Watch Group) have investigated local news.[55]

Method

Barkin has suggested that comparative content analysis between newspapers and television may "indicate ways the local mission (local news coverage and civic responsibility) is divided up between the metropolitan press and the community press."[56] The units of analysis described in this study are television newscasts and newspaper stories that meet the coding criteria. The concern with reporting about particular neighborhoods resulted in the coding of stories according to key words and neighborhoods.

A total of 66 primary neighborhoods were identified (the non-primary neighborhoods were geographically distant from the city center) the names of which were provided by the organization and city maps from local police (Appendix 1). A television news story was coded if a specific neighborhood was mentioned or was visually apparent. through a recognizable feature such as a street sign in the report. Newspaper stories were coded within the sample dates and were gathered through the Nexis/Lexis information service.

As this is a descriptive study, findings are reported in frequencies and percents. The methods used for creating a sample and coding are detailed for television and newspaper. Intercoder reliability for television and newspaper stories was 98.5 percent. Dictionaries were created for coding neighborhoods and key words. Key words were generated from the themes of promotional literature for the city. Any words that arose during coding were designated as key words and added to the dictionary. These words were applied to television and newspaper stories. The reporting of four main issues was coded under the following categories:

(1) Crime and violence. Members of the organization suggested that certain neighborhoods were considered by the media to be "war zones" and that the media were reporting crime as particularly rampant in those areas.

(2) City schools. Members felt that city schools were being portrayed as unsafe and not of the same quality as suburban schools.

(3) Cost of living. These were stories that suggested taxes and prices were excessive in the city.

(4) Quality of life. Stories dealing with housing, recreation, and business opportunities were coded.

Television

The 6:00 PM and 11:00 PM newscasts from the three major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC) serving the community were tape recorded for the period June 4-August 20, 1994 (12 weeks). The news was recorded that aired Monday through Saturday, resulting in 216 half-hour newscasts. Within this period, three constructed weeks were created in order to avoid any sequential biases in media presentations between networks. This resulted in 54 broadcasts across three networks. The average half-hour newscast contained 18 stories, resulting in 972 total stories for analysis. Alternative dates were identified if the date selected was a duplicate, there was a tape error, or no news program ran that evening. The news broadcasts to be coded (6:00 or 11:00 PM) were selected randomly by a coin flip.

The newscasts were coded based on the following criteria: length of story, theme addressed, key words, neighborhood in which the story took place, whether the context of the presentation was positive, negative, neutral, or unable to tell, and the method of story presentation. Four methods of news presentation served as categories:

(1) Package. Anchor introduces a story, throws to a reporter who, through video, tells the story.

(2) Voice-over. Anchor begins live in the studio, then footage comes over while reading.

(3) Reader. Anchor tells the story, no footage.

(4) Live. Anchor throws to a reporter who is live or might go to a package then back to live reporter who throws back to anchor.[57]

Newspaper

The Lexis/Nexis data base was used to search for stories during the same time period as the constructed three-week period for the television news. One daily newspaper serves the community (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*). The key words and neighborhoods were the same used in the television portion and served as search terms. The decision to use Lexis/Nexis, rather than a more traditional method such as looking at copies of the newspaper, was made to assure a higher degree of accuracy.[58]

Each date was entered separately, along with the key words and neighborhoods. Each entry often produced up to 100 stories, but many were duplicates. If, for instance, crime, murder, and killing appeared in one story, the story would appear three times during the search. Another issue involved relating the stories to the four themes. If a story uncovered by Lexis/Nexis did not relate to one of these themes it was not included. An example is an obituary, which very often mentions a neighborhood but is not a part of the themes of the study.

A total of 135 stories were selected that contained the key words and themes. Key words were counted for frequency and coded for context (positive, negative, neutral, unable to tell).

Findings

In most cases, the descriptive findings for television news and newspaper stories are described in the same tables. For format-specific issues, the findings are described separately.

A total of 78 stories were coded that met the criteria of neighborhood focus (8 percent). Nearly half of the stories (49 percent) were reported by the NBC affiliate, thirty-three percent by the ABC affiliate, and 18 percent of the stories reported by the CBS affiliate identified a specific neighborhood.

Approximately two-thirds of the news broadcasts coded occurred during the late (11:00 PM) news. The remaining forty percent of news programs were during the 6:00 PM newscast.

In terms of length, approximately one-third of the news stories were :20 in length or less, followed by 26 percent that were :60 or longer. The remaining stories (26 percent) were longer than 60 seconds.

Table 1 describes the neighborhoods mentioned in the television and newspaper stories. Television news rarely mentioned neighborhoods by name or by site. When neighborhoods were mentioned, Northside was referenced 20 percent of the time, followed by Oakland (10 percent) and Southside (8 percent).

In the newspaper stories, Northside was also mentioned most often (20 percent), followed by Homewood-Brushton and Oakland (6 percent each). The combined frequencies and percents are also provided.

Table 1
Neighborhood

	Television	%	Newspaper	%	Total Across	% Across
Northside	16	21	20	22	36	20
Homewood-Brushton	5	6	6	7	11	6
Oakland	9	12	2	2	11	6
Hill District	5	6	5	5	10	6
South Side	7	10	2	2	9	5
East Liberty	4	5	3	3	7	4
Hazelwood	3	4	4	4	7	4
Shadyside	3	4	2	2	5	3
East End	0	0	5	5	5	3
Mt. Lebanon	0	0	5	5	5	3
West End	0	0	5	5	5	3
Lawrenceville	4	5	0	0	4	2
Upper St. Clair	0	0	4	4	4	2
Squirrel Hill	3	4	1	1	4	2
Wilkensburg	0	0	4	4	4	2
McKeesport	0	0	3	3	3	2
Mt. Washington	2	2	1	1	3	2
Garfield	1	1	2	2	3	2
East Allegheny	0	0	2	2	2	1
Baldwin	0	0	2	2	2	1
Uptown	2	2	0	0	2	1
Monroeville	0	0	2	2	2	1
Aliquipa	0	0	2	2	2	1
Beechview	2	2	0	0	2	1
Sheraden	2	2	0	0	2	1
California-Kirkbride	2	2	0	0	2	1
Spring Garden	2	2	0	0	2	1
Bellevue	0	0	2	2	2	1
Downtown	0	0	0	2	2	1
Overbrook	1	1	0	0	1	0
Friendship	1	1	0	0	1	0
Highland Park	1	1	0	0	1	0

	Television	%	Newspaper	%	Total Across	% Across
Point Breeze	1	1	0	0	1	0
Stanton Heights	1	1	0	0	1	0
Knoxville	1	1	0	0	1	0
Brighton Heights	1	1	0	0	1	0
Perry Hilltop	1	1	0	0	1	0
Westmoreland	0	0	1	1	1	0
Butler/Adams	0	0	1	1	1	0
North Hill/Cranberry	0	0	1	1	1	0
Carnegie	0	0	1	1	1	0
Woodland Hills	0	0	1	1	1	0
Farrell	0	0	1	1	1	0
East Hills	0	0	1	1	1	0
Greenburg	0	0	0	1	1	0
Manhall	0	0	0	1	1	0
Perryville	0	0	0	1	1	0
Clairton/Pleasant Hills	0	0	0	1	1	0
Morningside	0	0	0	1	1	0
Rankin	0	0	0	1	1	0
Total	81	100	91	100	179	100

Table 2 (following page) describes the themes of stories in television, newspaper and the media combined. For both media, stories about crime and violence were reported most frequently (43 percent television; 56 percent newspaper; 51 percent combined). This is followed by the "other" category for television (31 perfect) which includes stories about local events such as fashion and pet shows and "quality of life" for newspapers (34 percent).

In more than half (51 percent) of the television stories, the context (framing) was positive. Approximately one quarter (26 percent) were neutral, 5 percent were negative, and 7 percent were unidentifiable. For newspaper, approximately two-thirds of the stories were neutral, 19 percent negative, and 7 percent positive.

In terms of reporting methods, two thirds (65 percent) of the presentations were done with voice-overs. Twenty-two percent were packages while a reader presented three percent of the stories. Only two stories were live.

Table 2

Theme of Stories

	Television	Percent	Newspaper	Percent	Total Across	Total%
Crime & Violence	34	43	75	56	109	51
Quality of Life	20	26	46	34	66	31
Schools	0	0	7	5	7	3
Taxes	0	0	7	5	7	3
Other	24	31	0	0	24	12
Total	78	100	135	100	213	100

Table 3 (following page) lists the key words used for searching both television news and newspaper stories. The most commonly occurring key word in TV stories was "killing" (16 percent) followed by "murder" (13 percent) and "fire" (9 percent). Newspaper stories featured the words "Blacks/African Americans" in 15 percent of the stories in which neighborhoods were mentioned. Thirteen percent of the stories mentioned gangs and eleven percent discussed taxes.

Table 3

Key Words Used in Stories

	Television		Newspaper		Total	
Word	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Across	%
Blacks/Afr.Am.	1	2	78	15	79	14
Gang	4	7	69	13	73	13
Taxes	1	2	59	11	60	11
Killing	9	16	40	7	49	9
Violence	4	7	44	8	48	9
Crime	2	4	47	9	49	9
Murder/Homicide	7	13	27	5	34	7
Drugs	3	5	32	6	35	7
Robbery	1	2	27	5	28	5
Northside	2	2	20	4	22	4
Shot/shooting	3	5	13	2	16	3
Housing project	1	1	11	2	12	2
Inner city	0	0	12	2	12	2
Fire	5	9	0	0	5	1
City Schools	0	0	7	1	7	1
West End	1	1	5	0	6	1
Danger	0	0	6	0	6	1
Rape	3	5	1	0	4	1
At-risk youth	1	2	0	0	1	0
Poverty	0	0	2	0	2	0
Urban Decay	0	0	2	0	2	0
Quality of Life	1	2	2	0	3	0
Kidnapped	1	2	0	0	1	0
Safety	1	2	0	0	1	0
Beaten	1	2	0	0	1	0
Juveniles	1	2	0	0	1	0
Guns	1	2	0	0	1	0
Stabbing	1	2	0	0	1	0
Car accident	1	2	0	0	1	0
War zone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	56	100%	504	100	560	100

Discussion

In examining the findings, local television news does tend to rely on the visually exciting and emotionally stimulating story. The key words "fire", "murder", and "killing" were most often mentioned. The research questions, illustrated by the four themes, suggest the following:

(1) Do the local media portray the city as initiating or leading change, or as responding to or reacting to social action?

Crime and violence. The themes of crime and violence appeared most frequently in both television news and newspaper stories. This is not surprising, given the visual nature of television and the graphic pictures provided with such stories. This finding relates to Dennis' and Merrill's charge that TV news emphasizes events that have a visual component regardless of the importance.[59] The newspaper stories often provided more details than television, but the headlines for such stories were often more general when referring to a neighborhood. The body of the story might mention a specific street or neighborhood, but the headline might simply say "East End" or "North Side". While this could be considered inaccurate, it could be viewed as a business strategy to grab the interests of as many potential readers as possible in order to compete for advertisers. This could also be interpreted as the newspaper performing the surveillance function. Conversely, others might interpret this as participation in the sensationalism being purveyed by other media.

(2) Are central city, poorer areas, and middle-class or wealthier neighborhoods depicted as separate constituencies or as reflections of one another?

City schools. Did not produce many stories or articles. This is likely due, at least in part, to the timing of the study (summer). The few stories available were a mixture of positive, negative, and neutral so it is difficult to draw any conclusions without further research when schools are in session.

Cost of living. This theme produced stories primarily about taxes. Reporters centered on school taxes, property, and sales tax increases. Almost without exception, the stories were straightforward, neutral, and did little to present a negative image of the city.

Little was done to explain or interpret tax issues for a better understanding. One of the charges against the media is lack of focus or depth about so-called "boring" issues such as taxes.

(3) Are different communities infused with their own particular characteristics? Do the local media recognize these features?

Quality of life. While there were a number of stories that could be interpreted as quite positive, this type of news does not necessarily produce a positive image or feeling. Stories were typically about the community and cultural affairs, particularly a baseball fair being held in Pittsburgh. This finding is in keeping with Barkin's concepts of community.

The overall numbers indicate that the media are not denigrating or misrepresenting neighborhoods. However, they are not necessarily recognizing the distinctiveness of these places. Only 8 percent of the television stories mentioned a specific neighborhood, despite high awareness of geographic areas. One reason why the perceptions of community leaders might vary with these results is that "bad" or "negative" news has been found to create bad images for a city, but good or neutral news does not produce a corresponding, positive effect.[60] Thus, the bad news, even if it is not directly associated with a neighborhood, may be lowering viewer opinion about the city and promoting a sense of helplessness.[61] Any good or neutral news is often overlooked. Chicago Mayor Harold Washington said that "most metropolitan newspapers do not cater to the working public within their cities; they reach out to the suburbs to embrace a more affluent readership."[62]

A negative area of reporting that stands out in this category of crime and violence is the issue of "gangs" in Pittsburgh. This fell under the quality of life category for coding purposes as the issue was presented as a problem that part of the very fabric of life in the city. In this area, the press coverage was quite negative. In addition, an important finding was that African Americans/Blacks were the only group of people noted by word.

Limitations

As a preliminary study, content analysis serves this study well. It is unobtrusive and allows for descriptive work. However, content analysis is not generalizable and has limited inferential depth. The timing of this study (summer) might have provided a different type of news than would appear during sweeps periods, for example. Future studies could replicate this work during the fall or winter. In addition, as a traditionally shift-work oriented community, the late news (as opposed to the early news) might have a very different audience, thereby affecting neighborhood-specific reporting.

Conclusions

Beyond providing support for the predictions of media dependency theory, this study offers an interdisciplinary connection between mass communication scholars, sociologists, and historians. Future studies, utilizing in-depth personal interviews with individuals living in the remaining post-industrialized cities, would be a provocative next step. Comparative work of local media in other cities could provide an interesting study of local news. The findings of this research also suggest important links for public relations scholars interested in the media directing public opinion. Certainly the study has theoretical links to agenda-setting, knowledge-gap, and accumulation theory.

The power of the media system lies in its control over scarce resources. In this case, the resource is information. As changes in society have occurred along with industrialization, such as increases in social conflict and social change, individuals rely on the mass media to reduce resultant feelings of ambiguity.[63] Individuals, groups, organizations, social systems, and societies depend upon information to attain their goals and to solve their problems. The goals-resources-dependency relationship determines the degree to which the media will have power in a particular situation. Media dependency theory stresses a tripartite model of media-audience-society. It is also a bidirectional theory that suggests people depend on the media and the media depend on people (the audience).[64] At times, however, the interests of the media organizations and those of the public (including community leaders) conflict.

Responsibility is a key component in the public's sense of the media performing their duty. Perhaps part of that expectation is a recognition of localism and community, thus helping to unite the community during times of social and economic upheaval where interpersonal ties might be absent. Some would argue that the selective, incomplete, and fragmentary nature of the media allows for "creation" of reality. Others would postulate that while the special interests of all segments of the community might not be served, the media, for the most part, "reflect reality". [65] A story may still be fair and accurate--as much as framing allows--but perceived differently by community groups and special interests with narrower point of view.

Again, Mayor Washington's view of eight years ago was of newspapers yet, his comment is relevant to all media today:

> These papers are still based in our cities, they own city property and to a great extent they control our cities. But newspapers largely ignore the people right around them.[66]

As an increasingly fragment population, Americans are looking more to the media in search of solutions to problems and interpretations of social and political issues which they cannot directly observe--even if what is happening at these times is uncomfortable.

Today's media system is part of the social fabric of modern life. The news media play a "vital role in communicating those events the public cannot experience directly. Implied in this role is the presumption that the news media act as a mirror of reality."[67] Key relationships are based on dependency, which may be with the entire media system or with a particular medium, such as television or newspaper. As the quality of these media improve technologically, they will assume more and more unique information functions without abandoning those of the past.

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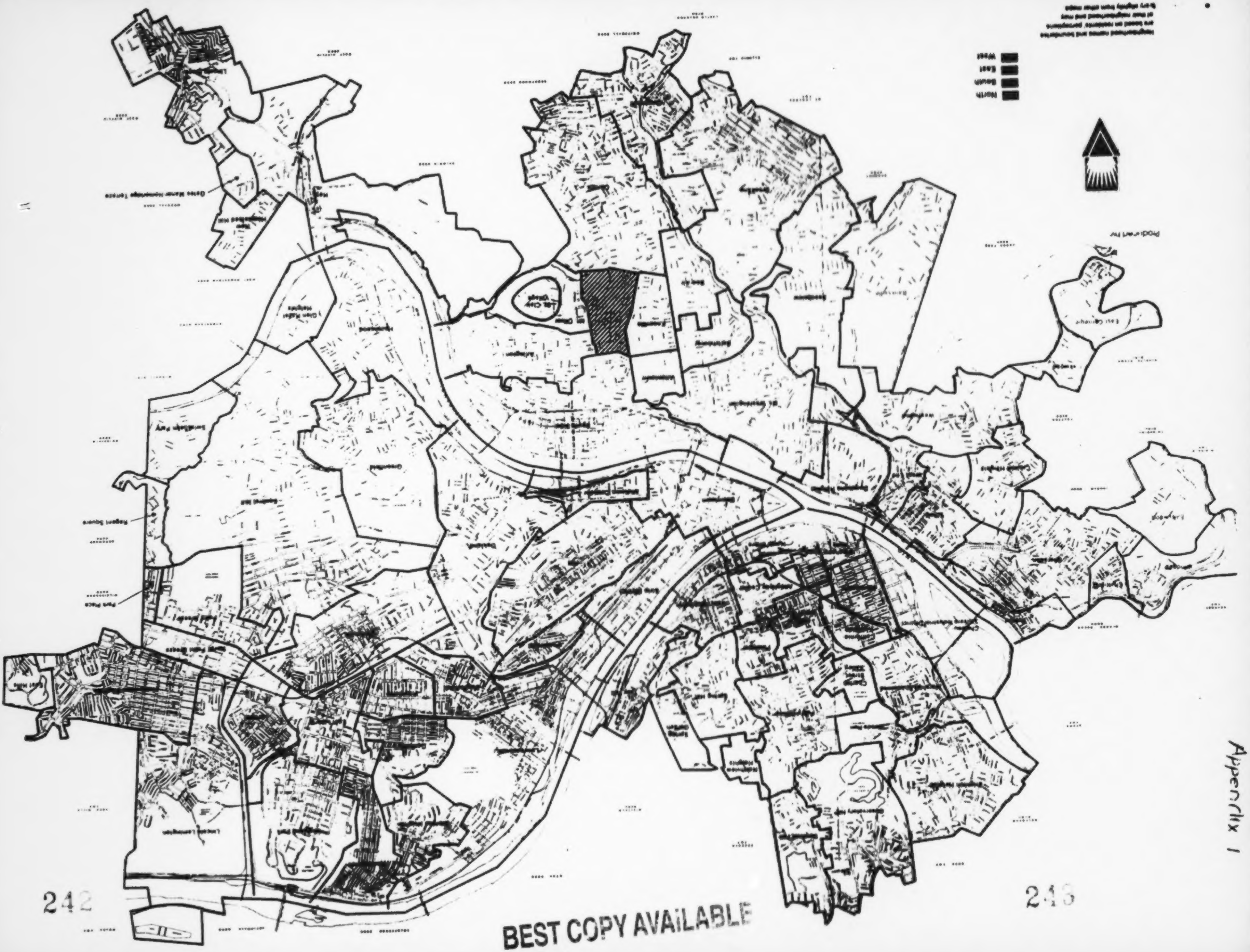
Neighborhood names and boundaries are based on residents' perceptions of their neighborhood and may vary slightly from other maps
North
South
East
West

Appendix I

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Roles Journalists Play:
An Examination of Journalists' Roles as Manifested in Samples of Their Best Work

Divya C. McMillin
Indiana University

Address: 1205 S. Fess Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47401
Phone: (812) 334 - 3229.
email: cpunitha@indiana.edu

RUNNING HEAD: Roles Journalists Play

Student Paper Submitted to the Mass Communication and Society Division for the 1996 Annual AEJMC Convention, Anaheim, California. August 10 - 13.

Roles Journalists Play:
An Examination of Journalists' Roles as Manifested in Samples of Their Best Work

Abstract

Samples of best work sent in by journalists in the Weaver-Wilhoit *American Journalist in the 1990s* survey were compared with those of the 1982 survey to see if journalists' perceptions of their professional roles were manifested in their stories. A content analysis of 180 stories and 50 open-ended responses showed that while the interpretive role was most evident in the stories examined in 1982, the disseminator role emerged most dominant in the current study. There were fewer institutional and more female sources than in 1982. News values in the stories remained relatively stable through the decade.

Roles Journalists Play:
An Examination of Journalists' Roles as Manifested in Samples of Their Best Work

Introduction

The American journalist has to acquire the skills of a master juggler to adapt to the profession's protean roles. Satellite transmission and videotapes have allowed radio and television greater immediacy while computer technology, the Internet, and satellites have given newspapers and magazines a more sophisticated and efficient way to publish. While new technologies make the world of the journalist an exciting one, audiences for news are growing at a sluggish rate.

Braestrup[1] stipulates that out of 92 television households in the nation, only one-fourth tune in to network news each night, and that the combined circulation for news magazines such as Time, Newsweek, and U.S. News & World Report has remained at around 10 million for the past 10 years. One-third of all Americans do not subscribe to a daily newspaper. Bogart[2] observes that two trends emerged in the 1980s as a response to the drop in newspaper penetration in American households: a greater emphasis on local news over national news, and an increased treatment of news as features rather than as hard news.

Television has been criticized for its tendency toward infotainment in such tabloid TV shows as Hard Copy, A Current Affair and Entertainment Tonight. "Stop the ratings slide with peroxide" was once the motto at NBC[3] in recognition of television's ability to transform reporters and anchorpersons into stars and celebrities.[4] With anchors and the

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type of news they present having a considerable influence on network ratings, the focus is on packaging the news so that it appeals to the widest possible audience. Ken Auletta, media critic and columnist for the New Yorker, feels that the print media has latched on to television's mode of presenting news as hollow shells of attractive headlines and pictures lacking depth and research.[5]

Walter Cronkite blames the shift from serious interpretive reporting to the dissemination of tabloid style "hypercompression" of facts, on the "destabilizing influence" of television.[6] And Gaunt argues in his study of U.S., British and French newspapers that the introduction of new technologies and the rapid growth of radio and television in recent history has recast the American journalist from watchdog to entertainer.[7]

News organizations therefore have to deal with a professional matrix composed of reader's interests, new technologies, and competitive marketing resources. These factors have important implications for the role of the American journalist.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the roles of American journalists as manifested in samples of their best work. This analysis is an adjunct to the 1992 American Journalist time study conducted by David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit. The Weaver-Wilhoit study is an update of their earlier 1981-82 survey which examines the characteristics of the American journalist. While journalists' responses to survey questions may reveal such psychographics as perceptions toward journalistic roles and news values, the actual work of the journalists provide evidence of whether or not these perceptions are carried over into the workplace.

From their 1982-83 national telephone survey of 1,001 journalists, Weaver & Wilhoit observed that "The rhetorical image of journalists that emerges in the popular discussion of the 1980s portrays journalists as an arrogant, meddlesome elite, bent on being adversaries."[8] The authors surveyed journalists on 10 media functions. Factor analysis was conducted on these functions to determine the pattern of perceptions of professional roles. Three clusters emerged, leading the authors to conclude that American journalists perceive themselves either as adversaries, interpreters, or disseminators of news.

The role of the journalist comes under renewed scrutiny with changes in the media environment due to new technologies, and the shift in focus from reader-oriented to market-oriented journalism. While the sample of journalists' best work in the 1982 survey indicated that the interpretive role was manifested most predominantly, the important question is, what role emerges in the best work of journalists a decade later? How does the best work of the journalist in the 1990s compare with that of the journalist in the 1980s?

To attempt to answer these questions, the 1,410 journalists in the 1992 American Journalist survey were asked to send a sample of what they considered their "best work," thinking that such work might be more likely to reflect their most cherished roles and news values than more typical day-to-day news coverage. The focus was not only on the roles that emerged in their reporting, but also in the type of news topics dealt with, the number and type of sources used, and the news values inherent in the stories.

How the Study Was Conducted

In this study, the stories sent in for the current analysis were compared with those analyzed in 1982. Therefore the major content categories used in the 1982 study were used in the present analysis.[9] This study differs from the earlier work in that the sample of stories is extended to include not only those from daily and weekly newspapers, but also those from magazines, radio, television, and wire services as well.

In addition to submitting a sample of their stories, journalists in the 1982 study were asked why they considered the sample their best work. Both responses and stories were analyzed using similar content categories to allow for comparisons between the two. In the current study, only the content of the news stories was analyzed. However, a random sample of 50 responses was drawn from journalists' comments to paint a general picture of why the stories were thought to be "best work." The results of this brief analysis are also discussed.

Fifteen percent of the 1410 survey participants responded, sending in a total of 206 stories. Of the participants, 56 percent were male and 41 percent female. For the analysis, 180 stories were selected.[10] Of these, 59 percent were from daily newspapers, 16 percent from weeklies, 8 percent from magazines, 7 percent from television, 6 percent from wire services, and 3 percent from radio.

All the stories were coded by the author. Ten percent of the stories were randomly selected and analyzed for the same content categories by a second coder.[11]

The placement of each story -- whether in a newspaper or in a news broadcast -- was difficult to determine because many stories were sent in as isolated newspaper clips or as single stories on videotape or audio cassette. Using only weeklies, magazines and wire services, however, it was possible to determine that 35 percent of the stories from these media were either cover stories, or appeared on page one.

The categories used to analyze each story included type of medium, general topic, general media role, specific media role, news value, event or issue orientation, number of sources and type of news sources. (See Appendix for details of the coding schedule.)

General Story Topics

Table 1 shows a dramatic shift from news about state and local government news and crime to news about celebrities and personalities and protests during the decade between 1982 to 1992. Of the 19 general news categories,[12] celebrities and personalities, and social problems and protests were the main topics of about 18 and 17 percent respectively of all the stories in 1992, compared to only 5 and 8 percent respectively in 1982. General human interest was the main topic of 12.5 percent of the news stories, a 3.5 percent increase from the 1982 estimate. State and local government news was discussed in about 9 percent of the stories, 5 percent less than in 1982. Education and news on business and finance ranked fifth in 1992, with about 6 percent each. These categories were ranked fifth and sixth respectively in the 1982 findings. Both crime news and art, leisure and travel were covered by about 5 percent each of the news stories in 1992.

Table 1 about here

The top five news categories in this study appeared in the top five categories of the 1982 study as well, but the categories dealing with "hard news"[13] dropped noticeably, perhaps reflecting changing news values and priorities. National government news tied for fifth place in the 1982 analysis, but placed sixteenth in the current study. State and local government news, which tied for first place with crime news in the 1982 study, ranked fourth in the present study. Crime news ranked sixth for the stories submitted in 1992. International news did not rank high in either 1982 or 1992.

Celebrities and personalities -- which is often considered a "soft news" category -- moved from fifth to first place between the two analyses. A majority of these stories were about people who emerged as public personalities because of their courageous battles with dreaded diseases or near fatal accidents. These people, including the occasional celebrity, were invariably from the local community. The stories from the other top five categories -- social problems and protests, general human interest, state and local government news, and education and schools -- also dealt mostly with events and issues pertaining to the local community.

This may be a reflection of a trend in newspapers in the 1980s to emphasize features and local news. On the other hand, since the stories were examples of best work, they may be descriptions of instances where the journalist tried to make a difference in the local community. To cite an example, one television reporter described a story on "life in the hood." This story illustrated the life of people in a project and the problems of crime, drugs, and alcohol faced everyday. Commenting on why this story was thought to be best work, the journalist said:

> It raises a lot of questions about how we live (and) how we treat people. It made people get involved and want to make changes. Very little is done in this situation and what little is done helps.

Another journalist describing a story about aerial spraying of herbicides on the community said the story was outstanding because:

> It illustrates that small town journalism makes as big a difference in people's lives as network news, just on a smaller scale. We made a difference.

In contrast to this local emphasis, there was scant representation of international news. This may be because a majority of the stories (59 percent) in this sample came from daily newspapers. While circulation figures for each paper are not provided, most of the papers in the United States are small. In 1994, only 34 out of 1,548 dailies in the U.S. had a circulation of more than 250,000.[14] Lack of resources in a small paper (or even many large organizations) make it logistically difficult for staff reporters to cover foreign news which is available from the wire services anyway.

Max Frankel, columnist for The New York Times Magazine, discusses the decline in audiences in both print and broadcast media when foreign news is given little more than marginal coverage. While the sample in this study does not represent news stories in general, it seems to mirror a trend in American journalism to lead the public "back to isolationism." With Americans "withdrawing into their shell(s), trying to hide from the strange and the distant",[15] the media seem to turn more and more to the coverage of local news and that which has impact on the local community.[16]

Finally, there was a greater representation of features over hard news. This may be a reflection of a trend in the media in general to provide greater coverage of stories that have emotional appeal and are of general human interest in order to cater to the widest possible audience.

Mass Media Role Perceptions

The Weaver & Wilhoit study identified three major journalistic roles or functions: interpretive, disseminator, and adversarial. The stories submitted by journalists were first coded for evidence of these general media roles. They were then coded for seven specific roles that defined the three general roles.[17] For example, a strike by a workers' union received detailed coverage by a daily newspaper. The report included events leading up to the conflict, opposing viewpoints of management and employees, and background information surrounding the issue. The story was coded for the general media role "interpretive," and then for its specific media role -- an "analysis or interpretation of complex problems."

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General Media Roles. The most dominant role or function found in the sample of stories was the disseminator, with almost 67 percent of the stories falling into this category. Twenty-two percent of the stories exhibited an interpretive function. These observations do not correspond with the 1982 findings. In the earlier study, 46 percent of the stories evidenced an interpretive stance, while 37 percent fulfilled a disseminator function. Both the present study and the 1982 analysis rank the adversarial role third, with about 11 percent and 13 percent of the stories portraying this role respectively. (See Figure 1).

Figure 1 about here

Overall, the journalists who submitted best stories were more likely to endorse the disseminator role in their stories than were the journalists in the total survey sample to rate this role as very important (67 percent compared to 51 percent). They were much less likely to convey the interpretive role in their stories than were the journalists in the larger sample to rate this role as very important (22 percent versus 63 percent). Finally, the journalists submitting best stories were less likely to portray the adversarial role in their stories than were those in the larger national sample to rank this role as very important (11 percent against 18 percent).

Specific Media Roles. Of the seven specific media roles portrayed in the stories, the top three -- appeals to a wide audience, analyzes or interprets complex problems, and gets story to public quickly were common and ranked similarly in both the 1982 and the current study. (See Table 2.)

The specific role "appeals to a wide audience" (a dimension of the disseminator role), was discerned in 50 percent of all the stories, far more common than stories that analyzed and interpreted complex problems and stories that stressed getting the information to the public quickly (about 14 and 18 percent respectively of all the stories). The categories that constituted the adversarial role -- adversary to business and adversary to officials -- were represented by 8 percent and 5 percent of the stories respectively. Three percent of the stories discussed government policy as it was developed, while only 1.5 percent described investigations into government claims, again suggesting a de-emphasis on traditional "hard" news.

Table 2 about here

Journalists' Responses

Table 3 illustrates how the random sample of 50 journalists' responses distributed across media roles. A majority of the journalists (N=23) said their stories were noteworthy because they were timely and relevant to the community. Thus, their responses endorsed the disseminator role. Nineteen journalists regarded their stories as "best work" because of the interpretation and analysis that was woven into it. The rest of the journalists (N=7) said their stories were a cut above the rest because of their adversarial nature.

An analysis of specific media roles evident in journalists' responses showed that 19 felt their stories were "best work" because they analyzed and interpreted complex problems. For example, one reporter described a story written on high salaries receieved by chief executive officers, and the widening gap between executive salaries and the pay of almost all others in society. This story was considered best work because:

> ... it makes the public aware of what I perceive to be a considerable problem in the economic democracy.

Another journalist felt his story about the confrontation between pro-abortion and anti-abortion activists was an example of best work because:

> (It is a) watershed issue in our country that clearly defines where the public stands on the issue of abortion. There seems to be no middle ground. Covering the story disclosed that for me and hopefully gave readers a true picture of how divisive and important this topic is.

The audience appeal of the story and its timeliness were reasons ranked second and third by the journalists, accounting for 14 and 9 responses respectively.

Table 3 about here

Factors Influencing Media Roles. Several factors besides the journalists' personal orientations may influence the roles portrayed in their news stories. These may be organizational factors, type of beat assigned, time and resources available, nature of the news story and even type of medium. While the influence of organizational, economic and time constraints on media roles could not be examined, the impact of orientation of news story and type of medium on these roles seemed important to determine.

It may be argued that the topic or category of the news story may also determine the type of role manifested in it. What is more important, however, is the way the topic is dealt with. A breaking news story of an accident or disaster might neccesitate the disseminator role. On the other hand, the same news story may be encased in other facts and background information if time and resources permit, and thus reflect an interpretive role. An analysis of general media roles by orientation of news story could provide a better idea of the possible influence of the story on media roles.

For this study, the relationship of story orientation (event vs. issue) and type of medium with general media roles was analyzed.

Story Orientation. Of all the stories in which the disseminator role was apparent, 34 percent dealt with events. Stories on issues and those whose orientation could not be determined accounted for 33 percent each. The relatively large proportion of stories that could not be coded as either event or issue is discussed later. For stories evidencing the interpretive role, 88 percent dealt with issues while only 10 percent dealt with events. Stories that portrayed an adversarial role were distributed such that 80 percent described issues and 20 percent events.

These findings confirm expectations that issue-based stories usually are dealt with in more depth than those based on events, and are more likely to incorporate interpretation and analysis. An adversarial stance is also more likely to be conveyed in the discussion of an issue. A specific event is more likely to be reported in a breaking story, allowing primarily for quick dissemination rather than for research and background information.

Type of Medium. The interpretive role was endorsed over the disseminator or adversarial roles across all media, with the print media (particularly wire services and news magazines) leading the pack. The analysis was extended to the sample of best stories to see if these observations were repeated.

The disseminator role was found dominant in stories sent in from weeklies (62 percent), television (58 percent), radio (83 percent), dailies (71 percent) and wire services (70 percent). Nearly half the stories from news magazines (47 percent) portrayed the interpretive role. Overall, the print media were more likely to endorse the interpretive role than were the broadcast media. (See Figure 2.) Evidence of the adversarial role was found in a minority of stories from all the media (13 percent each in dailies and news magazines, 10 percent in weeklies, 8 percent in television stories, and none in either radio or wire services).

Figure 2 about here

In summary, the disseminator role emerged as the most dominant in the sample of best stories and in the random sample of journalists' comments describing their best work. The interpretive and adversarial roles were far more likely to be found in stories dealing with issues than events and somewhat more likely in stories from the print media.

The disseminator role was slightly more likely to be found in stories dealing with events than issues. Other than news magazines, this role ranked first across all media.

News Values

The traditional news values of conflict, timeliness, proximity, prominence, unusualness and impact were used as content categories in the 1982 study. The same values were used for this analysis. It is possible that a single news story may contain more than one news value. For this study, however, each story was first coded for whether or not it had a news value, and then it was coded for the most prominent news value that it contained.

The findings showed that about 35 percent of the news stories were written for audience impact. This news value ranked second in the 1982 study. Most of the stories in this category dealt with such far reaching issues as breast cancer, AIDS, and domestic abuse. The stories were tales of triumph and human endurance. For example, one story narrated the tales of four women and their battle against breast cancer, while another related the story of a courageous boy with an incurable heart disease. These stories seemed to advocate a lesson in hope, countering a time worn belief that journalists are a cynical lot. Conflict ranked second, with 24 percent of the best stories containing this value. The 1982 study ranked conflict third. Timeliness placed third in this analysis, evident in 13 percent of the news stories. This value ranked fifth in 1982. (See Table 4.)

Proximity, which ranked first in 1982, was evident as a major value in only 10 percent of the stories submitted in 1992. Thus, it was ranked fourth.[18] Unusualness and prominence tied for fifth in the current study while these values ranked fourth and sixth respectively in 1982.

Table 4 about here

Journalists' Responses. A crosstabulation was conducted on reasons why the stories were considered best work by type of medium. The results showed that impact or "affected many or all in the community" was the most prominent news value cited by journalists across the various types of media. This value was mentioned in 25 responses.

One weekly reporter described the coverage of a base closure in Kingsville, Texas:

> Essentially we competed with two other communities. One of the three communities was going to lose their base. I covered this for two months. It was a relief within our community that we did not lose our base and sadness for the community that did lose their base. I covered the emotions for these communities.

A radio journalist recounted:

> We broke a story about a very major housing development. It showed initiative on the part of the reporter and (had) a significant impact on the community.

From these comments, it is obvious that proximity also was a significant contributor to the story's newsworthiness. In fact, a recoding of the responses to determine how many dealt with local issues showed 32 pertained to the local community.

To be consistent however, only the most prominent news value cited was coded, therefore impact was ranked first in these examples. Proximity was identified as a major contributor to the story's newsworthiness in two of the responses.

Prominence of characters in the news stories was cited as another reason for considering them best work. This value was mentioned in six responses. The timeliness, unusualness and conflict inherent in the news story all ranked third in the reasons why the stories were considered the best, and occurred in four responses each. One journalist said the story was thought to be "best work" because of the amount of research that went into it.

The findings on news values tend to support the earlier observations made about the roles portrayed in the news stories. It was noted earlier that stories in this sample tended more toward the disseminator role than the interpretive or the adversarial. The subcategories that define the disseminator role are "timeliness" and "appeal to the widest audience possible." Translating these into news values, impact (or affecting a lot of people) seemed to be the news value that most frequently appeared in the news stories. Timeliness ranked third among the news values present in the sample of stories. The journalists' responses to why the stories were considered the best tended to correspond with the actual news values inherent in the news stories, with impact and timeliness ranking in the top three values for both responses and stories.

Story Orientation

The results were consistent with the 1982 study in that more stories dealt with issues (50 percent) than events (27 percent). These results were not surprising because in most cases a discussion of issues allows for greater detail, research and flexibility of writing style. An event on the other hand, may be anticipated or unanticipated. It may demand quick thinking and immediate deadlines and may not allow for a journalist's best efforts. Thus it seems likely that the journalists in the survey would send samples of their best work that dealt with issues rather than events.

About 23 percent of the stories could not be coded as either. These were humor columns, discussions of the arts or descriptions of tourist attractions. (See Figure 3.) A few news photographers from a TV station sent in clips of their camera work. These included a short feature on a diner waitress, a biking trip in the mountains, and parts of a travel series. Such features were light, timeless pieces. They could not be coded for story orientation since they did not deal with either an event or an issue. This proportion marks a substantial increase from the 1982 estimate of 6 percent. However, it tends to support the earlier finding that a majority of the stories were aimed at appealing to the widest audience possible.

Another reason could be that a majority of the stories were from newspapers (59 percent). For many, newspapers are used more to supplement the information provided on television rather than as a primary source of information.[19] In order to compete with television's short news capsules and sound bites, many U.S. newspapers are leaning toward shorter, lighter features.[21]

Figure 3 about here

Sources

Journalistic tradition hinges on the notion of objectivity. To establish objectivity the reporter maintains a personal distance from the story and uses various sources to adequately convey all the sides of the story.

A news organization constructs what Tuchman calls a "news net".[22] A news net is a complex mesh of wire services, editors, reporters, and stringers that provides the news organization with stories from not only the local community but also from various parts of the world, and does so in a timely manner. As a part of a newsnet, the reporter may be assigned to news and sources based on "social location," "organizational routine,"[23] and "topical specialization."[24]

The number and type of sources used in the best stories is an indication of the extent and nature of the newsnet used by the journalists submitting these stories. As in the 1982 study, the current analysis showed that a majority of the stories (90 percent) used at least one source. The number of sources per story ranged from none to 30. Eighteen stories did not have any cited sources. These included editorials, columns, visual footage, and audio commentary for light entertainment articles. Mean number of sources per story was 5.4, close to the 1982 average of 5.3.

Eighty percent of the sources were identified. The mean number of identified sources in 1982 and the current analysis was almost the same -- 4.6 and 4.8 respectively. Overall, 89 percent of the stories contained some identified sources in 1982. The proportion of stories that included such sources in 1992 increased to 98 percent. The number of stories containing anonymous sources dropped from 30 percent in 1982 to 23 percent in 1992. (See Table 5.)

Previous research has shown that on average, institutional sources are used in a news story more often than non-institutional sources. Gans calls people affiliated with institutions "knowns." Included in this category are political, economic, social, or cultural elites. Knowns appear in print and television news about four times as much as the unknowns who are ordinary people, including "low level public officials."[25] While the sample is not a random selection of general news stories, they were analyzed to see if the sources cited reflected Gan's observations.

The results showed that 54 percent of the sources were institutional while 35 percent were from non-institutional sources, thus supporting Gans' conclusions. Eleven percent were from special interest groups. In 1982, however, a notably larger proportion of the sources (70 percent) were institutional and fewer were non-institutional (26 percent), and from special interest groups (4 percent).

Table 5 about here

Of all the news sources, 80 percent were people, while only 20 percent were documents, but this is an increase from 1982. These findings echo Sigal's recognition of a trend in the "peopling" of news.[26] People in the news are identified to enhance the personal side of the news story. Sigal notes that such a tradition persists from the muckraking era of American journalism and fulfills a need to attach responsibility to the person or persons involved in the news.

An interesting observation was that while males still accounted for a majority of the sources (71 percent in 1982 and 43 percent in the present analysis), the proportion of female sources increased from 15 percent in 1982 to 37 percent in the current study. In 1982, 41 percent of the stories contained at least one female source. In this analysis, the proportion of stories containing female sources increased by 19 percent, while those containing male sources decreased by 23 percent.

The proportion of documentary sources increased from 8 percent in 1982 to 20 percent for the stories submitted in 1992. Overall, however, the proportion of *stories* containing at least one documentary source remained about the same with 30 percent in 1982 and 32 percent in the current study.

Two major observations may be made from this comparative analysis. There is an increase in proportion of non-institutional sources and in the proportion of female sources between the two analyses. The greater proportion of female sources may be because more and more women are being represented in conventionally male dominated institutions. It could also mean that journalists are extending their "news nets" to include ordinary people and nonconventional sources as the definitions of news change.

Summary and Conclusions

The stories in this sample covered a wide range of topics. There seemed to be more focus on features and local news as opposed to hard news and news across state and national borders. This suggests that journalists submitting their best work might have chosen those stories which had an impact on the local community, stories which they felt made a difference to their audiences. It may also be that the stories reflect a general trend in the media to focus on community affairs and local concerns rather than provide a representation of news from all over the world. The higher representation of features suggests a tendency to humanize the news and highlight its emotional content, although the sample is not representative of U.S. journalists' work. This featuristic approach to the news story may be due largely to television's increasing influence over the decade.

These observations are further supported by the news values found in the stories. While impact on the audience was the most frequently occurring news value in the stories, the presence of conflict in the news story (ranked second) may have urged an elaboration of the emotional content of the story. In the journalists' responses, impact was the most frequently cited reason for why the story was considered best work. Timeliness as a news value ranked third in both stories and responses. Timeliness and audience impact are both dimensions of the disseminator role as is defined in this study.

Even though the journalists in the survey endorsed the interpretive role over disseminator and adversarial, the disseminator role emerged as the most dominant in the samples of best work submitted. This suggests that journalists' role perceptions may not always correspond with the roles manifested in their stories. An obvious reason for this difference could be that a majority of the journalists who submitted their "best work" may have been those who endorsed the disseminator role in the main survey. But the random sample of 50 journalists' responses also rated the disseminator role more important than the interpretive or adversarial roles.

The changing environment of the audience and the newsroom may be another reason for this discrepancy. Several researchers have pointed out that new technologies in the workplace and in the audience's home require the journalist to be more an entertainer than watchdog or interpreter. The efforts of the journalist may now be channeled more into packaging the news so that it appeals to the widest possible audience rather than interpreting and analyzing complex problems or investigating claims by government or businesses.

A study that asks journalists to reflect on why there is a discrepancy between perceived roles and actual behavior may throw additional light on this issue. Research on organizational, economic, and other external factors that constrain the journalist may also help to clarify why the role manifested in "best work" does not correspond with the role journalists feel they should fulfill.

The findings for story orientation support those made in 1982. More stories focused on issues than events. However, those that could not be coded as either required closer examination. These stories were re-read, and it was found that most were columns in newspapers or video footage on travel, art, and leisure designed for audience pleasure and entertainment. For a future study, the author suggests a new category such as "light feature" or "entertainment" in addition to "events" and "issues" to accommodate stories in this category.

In some ways, the analysis of news sources corresponded with the findings of the 1982 study. A majority of the sources were identified. There were more institutional than non-institutional or special interest group sources. Male sources accounted for a majority of sources over female or documentary sources. But there were some differences in 1992 as compared to 1982, including fewer institutional and more non-institutional sources, a decrease in the proportion of male sources, and an increase in the proportion of female sources. This suggests that journalists may be stepping out of more conventional news beat systems and tapping ordinary people as sources more often. A content analysis of the different types of sources used by various media would provide a more comprehensive picture.

While these findings echo some of those from 1982, new trends have been discerned in the featuristic treatment of the news. Further research in this area using news stories selected from a broader, more representative sample may provide increased understanding of the relationship between news coverage and the perceived roles of the journalist, as well as changing patterns of news coverage.

Endnotes

1. Peter Braestrup. (1992). "Epilogue". In Philip S. Cook, Douglas Gomery and Lawrence W. Lichty (Eds.), The Future of News. Washington D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Press.

2. Leo Bogart, "State of the Industry", In Philip S. Cook, Douglas Gomery, and Lawrence W. Lichty, The Future of News (Washington D.C: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1992), pp. 85-103.

3. In 1989, NBC replaced Jane Pauley, a brunette in her late thirties, with Deborah Norville, blonde and in her mid-twenties, on the "Today" show.

4. Douglas Gomery, "Newsworkers and Newsmakers," In Philip S. Cook, Douglas Gomery, and Lawrence W. Lichty, The Future of News (Washington D.C: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1992), pp. 85-103.

5. Ken Auletta, "A Decade of Change: 'It's Demographics, Stupid'!" Media Studies Journal 9(1), (Winter 1995), p. 78.

6. Walter Cronkite, "A Decade of Change: Journalism and its Public", Media Studies Journal, 9(1), (Winter 1995), p. 77.

7. Philip Gaunt, Choosing the News: The Profit Factor in News Selection (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), p. 30.

8. David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit. (1986). The American Journalist: A Portrait of U.S. News People and Their Work. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. p. 112.

9. The categories pertained to general content and orientation of the news story rather than such particular features as the length of news story. Thus the same categories were also used for radio and television stories. Photographs and cartoons were eliminated from the sample because they could not be adequately analyzed for a few of the content categories such as role perception and number and type of sources.

10. Several journalists (N=20) sent in more than one story. In the case of a set of unrelated stories, a table of random digits was used to determine the story to be coded. For stories that reported on an ongoing issue or event (N=23), the major, most detailed story was selected. Also, stories sent in by editors (N=20) were not coded. This was because such stories usually included a package of news articles that was not the work of any particular journalist, but reflected the style of the news organization as a whole.

11. Overall intercoder reliability: Holsti's R = .77. While coding the number of sources, agreement between the coders was determined by comparing the total number of sources in each story plus or minus two.

12. See Judee K. Burgoon, Michael Burgoon and Charles K. Aitkin, The World of the Working Journalist (Newspaper Readership Project, Newspaper Advertising Bureau, New York, September 1982), p. 69. Lori A. Bergen, "Testing the Relative Strength of Individual and Organizational Characteristics in Predicting Content of Journalists' Best Work," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1991.

In the Burgoon et al. study, nineteen news categories were defined by journalists as news categories most interesting to readers. The categories were used in the 1982 study by Bergen to analyze journalists' responses and stories submitted as "best work".

13. While "hard news" and "soft news" are difficult to define, general descriptions are attempted. For this narrative, the concepts are used as they are defined in Gaye Tuchman, Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality (New York: The Free Press, 1978) pp. 47 - 58. Hard news is regarded as that which is timely, factual, usually involving the government, accidents, disasters, and crime. Soft news, on the other hand, includes features and human interest stories.

14. Editor & Publisher International Yearbook, (New York: Editor & Publisher, 1995).

15. Max Frankel, "Beyond the Shroud," The New York Times Magazine, March 19, 1995, p. 30.

16. Ibid, p. 42.

17. The specific dimensions that defined each general role are:
disseminator role: get information to public quickly, and concentrate on widest possible audience.
interpretive role: provide analysis of complex problems, discuss national policy as it is developed, and investigate claims made by the government.
adversarial role: adversarial stance or skepticism toward government or public official, and adversarial stance or skepticism toward business.

19. A reason for this could be that only the most dominant value was coded in each story. While impact and proximity were closely related in several stories, impact was coded over proximity in many when it emerged as the more dominant of the two.

20. Robert L. Stevenson, "The Disappearing Reader," Newspaper Research Journal, 15 (3), (Summer 1994), pp. 22 - 31.

21. Auletta, 'It's Demographics, Stupid!' p. 78.

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22. Tuchman, Making News, p. 21.

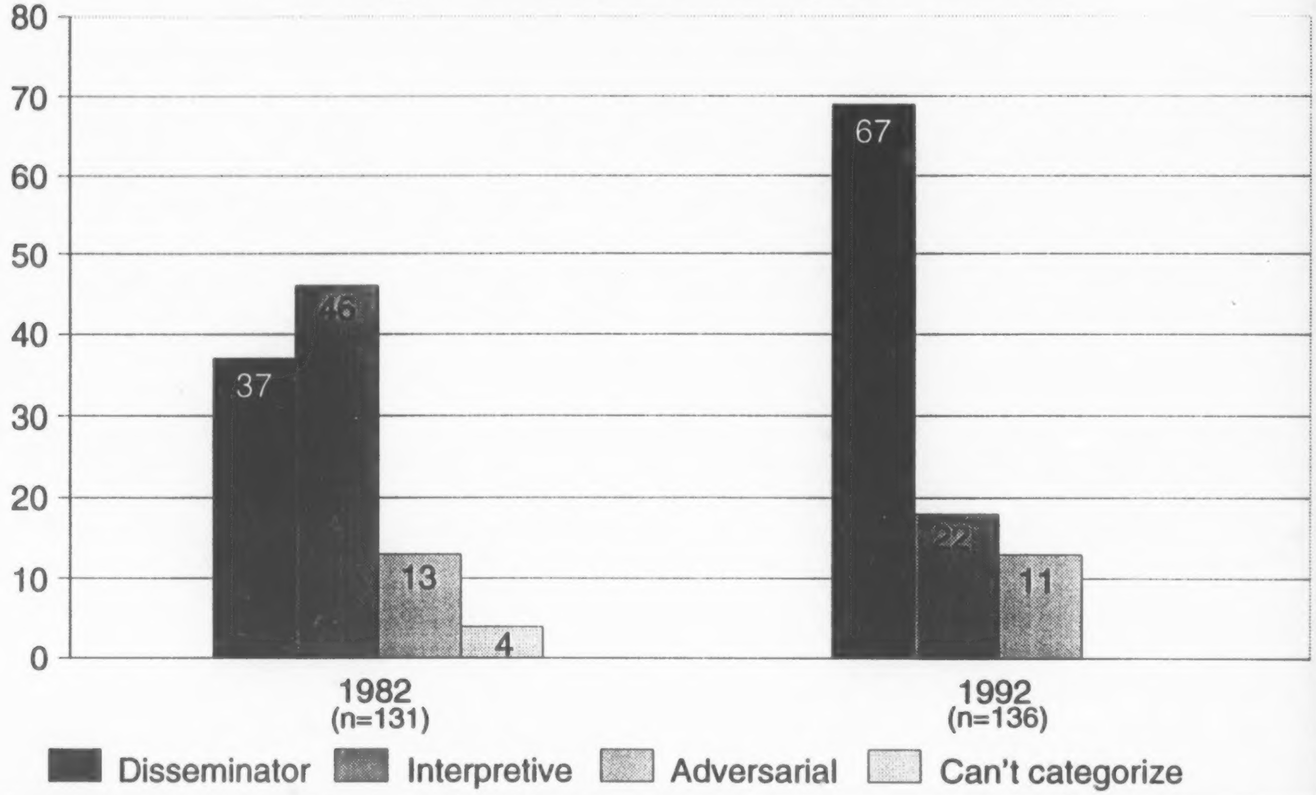
23. Leon V. Sigal, "Sources Make the News," In Robert K. Manoff & Michael Schudson, Reading the News (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 16.

24. Tuchman, Making News, p. 29.

25. Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time (New York: Random House, 1980), p. 13.

26. Sigal, Sources Make the News, pp. 9-37.

Figure 1



General Media Roles
(Percentage of Best Work From Newspaper Journalists)

Figure 2

Distribution of Roles in Stories From Various Media
(Percentage of Best Work)

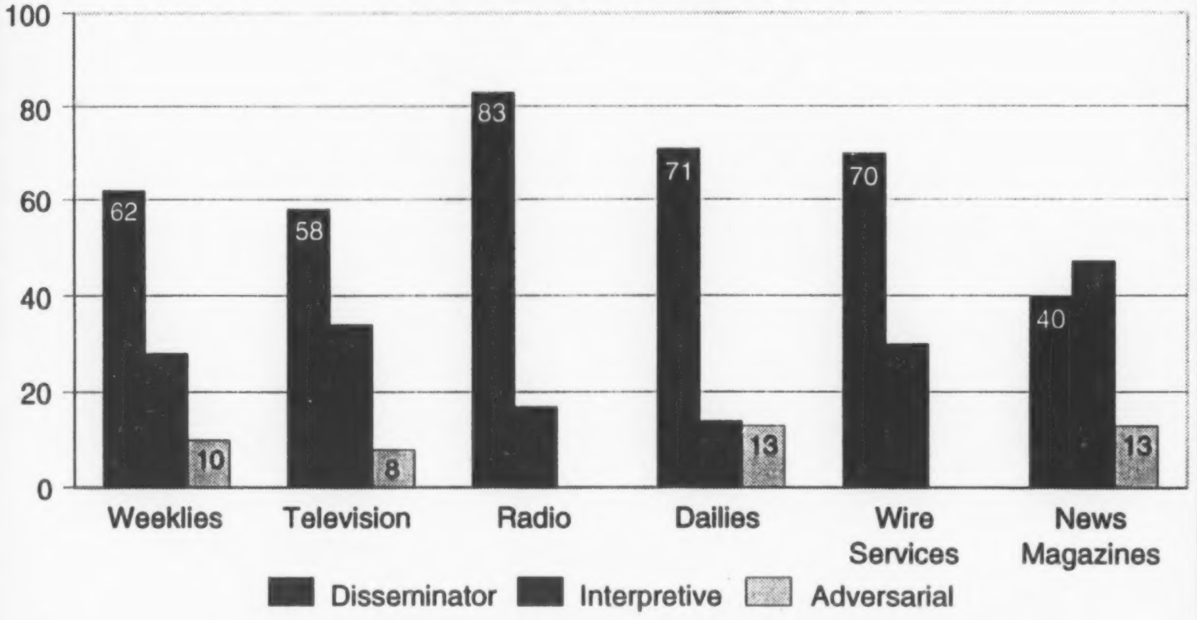


Figure 3

Events and Issues in Journalists' Best Work

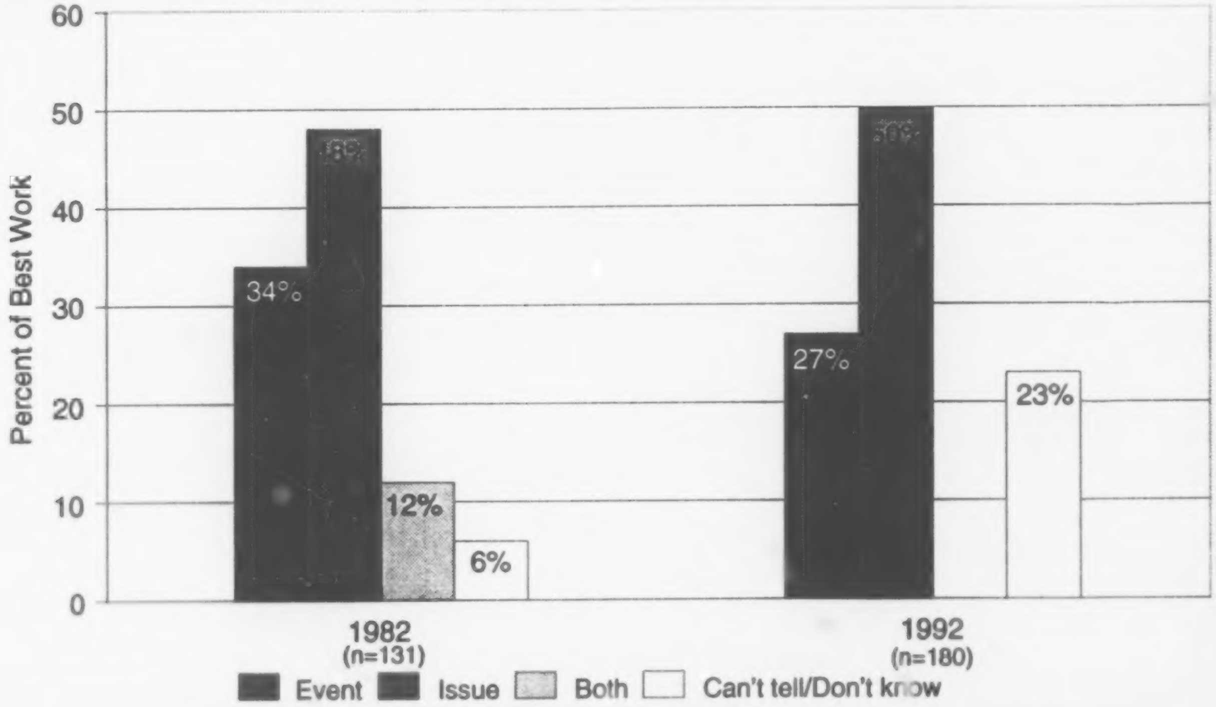


Table 1 Story Topics of Newspaper Journalist's Best Work

Story Topics[a]	*Percent of Best Work*		*Ranking*	
	1982 (n=131)	*1992* (n=136)	*1982*	*1992*
Celebrities and personalities	5	18	5th-tie	1st
Social problems and protests	8	17	4th	2nd
General human interest	9	12.5	3rd	3rd
State and local government news	14	9	1st-tie	4th
Education and schools	5	6	5th-tie	5th-tie
Business and finance	4	6	-	5th-tie
Crime news	14	5	1st-tie	-
Arts, leisure and travel	5	5	5th-tie	-
Medical news	5	4	5th-tie	-
Sports	5	4	5th-tie	-
Environment and energy	3	3	-	-
Accidents and disasters	3	1.5	-	-
Economic news and issues	2	1	-	-
Humor	3	2	-	-
Other	0	1.5	-	-
National government news	5	1	5th-tie	-
International news	2	1	-	-
Science Invention and Space	1	0	-	-
Consumer information and advice	5	1.5	5th-tie	-
Religion	4	1	-	-

[a] From Judee K. Burgoon, Michael Burgoon, and Charles K. Atkin. *The World of the Working Journalist*, p. 69. These categories were specified by reporters as those most interesting to readers.

Table 2 Specific Media Roles Emphasized in Newspaper Stories

	Percent of Best Work	*Ranking*	
Specific Media Roles	*1992*	*1982*	*1992*
	(n=136)	*(n=131)*	*(n=136)*
Appeals to a wide audience	50	1st	1st
Analysis/interpretation of complex problems	14	2nd	3rd
Get story to public quickly	18	3rd	2nd
Adversary to business	8	7th	4th
Adversary to government	5	6th	5th
Discusses policy as it is developed	3	4th	6th
Investigates government claims	1.5	5th	7th

Table 3 Specific Media Roles in 50 Journalists' Open-Ended Descriptions of Best Work

Media Roles	***Number of Responses***	***Rank***
Analyzes and interprets complex problems	19	1
Appeals to a wide audience	14	2
Gets story to public quickly	9	3
Adversary to business	5	4
Adversary to government	2	5
Discusses policy as it is developed	-	6.5
Investigates government claims	-	6.5

Table 4 Six Traditional News Values in Newspaper Stories

News Value	***Percent of Best Work***	***Ranking***	
	1992	***1982***	***1992***
	(n= 136)	*(n=131)*	*(n=136)*
Impact	35	2nd	1st
Conflict	24	3rd	2nd
Timeliness	13	5th	3rd
Proximity	10	1st	4th
Unusualness	8	4th	5th-tie
Prominence	8	6th	5th-tie

Table 5 Distribution of Sources in Newspaper Journalists' Best Stories

	Distribution of Sources Within Category		*Percent of Stories With This Type of Source*	
Sources Category	*1982*[a]	*1992*[b]	*1982*	*1992*
Identification of Sources				
Identified	85	78	89	98
Anonymous	9	22	30	23
Type of Sources				
Institutional	70	54	89	67
Non-Institutional	26	35	51	62
Special Interest Group	4	11	14	8
Nature of Sources				
Female	15	37	41	60
Male	71	43	94	71
Document	8	20	30	32

[a] Of the 131 stories submitted in 1982, 120 were coded because 11 did not cite any sources.

[b] Of the 136 stories submitted in 1992, 119 were coded because 17 did not cite any sources.

Online Cities: Are They Building a Virtual Public Sphere or Expanding Consumption Communities?

by Sally J. McMillan and Kathryn B. Campbell
University of Oregon

Prepared for the Mass Communication & Society Division

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Direct correspondence to first-named
author at:
920 Marquet Way
Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: 541-341-3977
Fax: 541-346-0682
e-mail: sjm@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Abstract:

Contemporary society needs a public sphere. Interactive media may meet or defeat that need. This study finds that more than 70 percent of city sites on the World Wide Web represent the commercial sphere. Of those sites that focus on community-building, most "official" city sites extend the one-way public information model into cyberspace. Volunteer-based sites are somewhat more likely to see two-way benefits of online communication and envision it as a replacement for traditional media.

Introduction

> In the pre-information-society environment, the "people" were understood to be a community, using communication in an effort to constitute their environment through engagement in participatory democracy .... During the [early] stages of the information society, the community was transformed into an audience of consumers of commoditized information .... [P]eople have been transformed again, into a network.[1]

In this new world of networked information, what are the roles of the individual, the community, and the public process? This study addresses these questions by examining the evolution of the concept of local community and identifying some responses to the breakdown of the public sphere in those communities. The researchers combine content analysis and survey techniques to evaluate the current status of interactive networked communication as a tool for building a new forum for community-based participatory democracy.

The Internet is the best current example of interactive networked communication. The World Wide Web (or Web) is a portion of the Internet that enables easy-to-use, hypermedia, multi-media communication. As of February, 1996 the Web hosts at least 1,046 home pages that represent cities or towns in the United States.[2] A recent study[3] reports that 17 percent (37 million) of persons 16 and older in North America have Internet access. This paper examines key factors that determine how cities communicate with this audience in "cyberspace."

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[1] Sandra Braman, "Harmonization of Systems: The Third Stage of the Information Society," *Journal of Communication* 43 (Summer 1993): 138.

[2] This number is based on the researchers' count of United States cities listed by City.Net as of 10 February 1996. City.Net (http://www.city.net) is a Website that serves as an online "index" of online city information.

[3] CommerceNet/Nielson, "The CommerceNet/Nielson Internet Demographics Survey," October 30, 1995. Available Online: http://www.commerce.net/information/surveys/exec_sum.html.

Community and Communication

Webster defines community as "people with common interests living in a particular area," or "an interacting population of various kinds of individuals ... in a common location."[4] The notion of community has evolved, sometimes slowly; sometimes with a jolt. The Tofflers say three "waves" of social and economic change have shaped the conception of community.

The first wave of socioeconomic change occurred when humans began systematically to apply principles of agriculture. This wave represented a significant shift from the earlier hunter-gatherer societies and formed the basis for strong place-based communities that worked together to ensure their common economic survival.

Industrialization characterized the second major wave of change. The population shifted to cities where industrial production was centered. But a place-based sense of community survived through much of the industrial era. The Tofflers suggest that "the shared image of an industrial future tended to define options, to give individuals a sense not merely of who or what they were but of what they were likely to become."[5] While that sense of personal destiny may have required moving from one physical location to another, individuals still viewed themselves as citizens of a given geographic region.

The third wave of change has been defined as a knowledge revolution, an information revolution, and a shift to a service-based economy. This wave of change began in the mid-1950s, and its long-term effects on community are not yet clear. On the one hand, there is evidence of a breakdown in citizen participation accompanied by a general disillusionment with the public process. Boyte suggests that the emergence of the information society creates a greater need for "community-wide meeting grounds" at the same time that "common areas" have all but disappeared from American life.[6] On the other hand, communication technologies that shape this third wave of change also offer the potential to revitalize a sense of community.

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[4] *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1976 ed., s.v. community.

[5] Alvin Toffler and Heidi Toffler, *Creating a New Civilization*, (Atlanta: Turner Publishing, Inc., 1995), p. 24.

A brief review of the concept of local community in each of these three waves of social change follows. Emphasis is placed on the communication tools that are central to the formation of community in each of these socioeconomic orders.

The Public Sphere and "Physical Community"

Habermas examines the role of the "public sphere" in shaping community and traces the public sphere to the ancient Greek agora, which was both a marketplace and a gathering place for public discourse. Key elements of this public sphere are open access, voluntary participation that is not based on institutional roles, generation of public opinion through physical co-presence and rational discussion, and freedom to express opinions and to criticize.

In "first wave" societies of America, the public sphere was often synonymous with the town square. Communication about issues such as education, shared physical resources, and maintenance of law and order were discussed by the citizens. This public discussion led to a sense of public ownership and commitment. Boyte says the common area was the "center for a particular kind of political education, where citizens hear the latest news, exchange views with people beyond their immediate circle of friends and acquaintances, and engage ... in debate and discussion about public issues and community problems."[7]

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[6] Harry C. Boyte, "Overview: Rethinking Politics," *National Civic Review* (July/August 1989): 251.

[7] Ibid., 249.

The Industrial Age and "Consumption Community"

Habermas suggests that the industrial age marked the beginning of the end for the public sphere. As individuals moved to larger cities, the town square was no longer a sufficient forum for public discussion. In addition to managing the types of public issues that had characterized discussions in the town square, public discussions also began to turn to what Habermas called "matters of general interest" such as slavery and the rights of the states.

In the 19th century, print media began to serve as the communication vehicle for these matters of general interest. Local newspapers also took on the role of recording matters of local public interest and in some cases advocating public positions. But Habermas suggests that the rise of advertising and public relations activities that corresponded closely to the rise of newspapers undermined the public sphere by inventing a kind of "buyable and sellable phony discourse that displaced the genuine kind."[8]

In the 20th century, new media such as radio and television began to displace public discourse. These new media were driven by commercial interests from their inception and have contributed to a shift from a public sphere-based community to consumer-based society. Boorstin identifies this new social ordering as "consumption communities" that are "held together by much thinner, more temporary ties than those that bound early America."[9]

But these new consumption communities are no longer necessarily local in nature. Levitt suggests that products can be marketed globally with little change to the marketing message. He sees consumption communities as global in nature and implies that local community has little relevance in the larger framework of a global economy.

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[8] From a discussion of Habermas and the public sphere in Howard Rheingold, *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1993), p. 285.

[9] Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Decline of Radicalism: Reflections on America Today* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 22.

The Information Age and "Virtual Community"

The consumption communities of the late-industrial era may be the precursors of what Rheingold has labeled the "virtual communities" of the information age. He envisions the networks of computer-mediated communication (CMC) as being central to this transition from physical local communities to virtual communities that are not bounded by geography.

> When we say "society," we usually mean citizens of cities in entities known as nations .... But the mass-psychological transition that people made to thinking of ourselves as part of modern society and nation-states is historically recent. Could people make the transition from the close collective social groups, the villages and small towns of premodern and precapitalist Europe, to a new form of social solidarity known as society that transcended and encompassed all previous kinds of human association? ... All the questions about community in cyberspace point to a similar kind of transition that might be taking place now, for which we have no technical names.[10]

CMC may be the cause of a changed definition of community. CMC may also replace both the town square and mass media as the means of communication that supports public discourse in the new virtual communities of cyberspace.

However, Moore questions whether "mediated" communities connected by electronic networks are truly communities. He suggests that computer-mediated communities need to "develop traditions that join the individuals in the group in meaningful ways."[11]

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[10] Rheingold, p. 63-64.

[11] Carl M. Moore, "Community is Where Community Happens," *National Civic Review* (Fall 1991): 354.

Responses to Breakdown in the Public Sphere

Scholars, pollsters, news reporters and commentators seem to be in almost universal agreement that the public life in America is ill – perhaps even on its deathbed. The symptoms of this illness are often characterized by apathy and lack of participation in public life.[12] Three "treatments" for the ills of public life have recently emerged: public deliberation resulting in public judgment, public journalism, and public places in cyberspace.

Public Deliberation and Public Judgment

Yankelovich traces the breakdown of the public sphere to a lack of opportunity for citizens to deliberate publicly and come to public judgment. He says that information bombards us, experts overwhelm us, and judgment is accorded second-class status as a form of knowledge. He identifies three stages in the process of coming to public judgment: consciousness-raising; synthesizing competing values; and resolution of cognitive, emotional and moral issues. He identifies the following preconditions for coming to public judgment:

- a public space
- consciousness-raising and the opportunity for genuine debate
- discussion of choices and their consequences
- a forum for working through a problem
- freedom from manipulation and coercion as resolution is reached
- an acceptance of public judgment as *more* valid than expert, information-based opinion
- a willingness of political leaders to respond to and respect the public will as articulated by its judgment.[13]

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[12] For a summary of some of the commentary on the decline of public life, see Richard C. Harwood, *Citizens and Politics: A View from Main Street America* (Kettering Foundation, 1991), p. 11-18.

[13] Daniel Yankelovich, *Coming to Public Judgment*, (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1991) p. 233.

The principles of coming to public judgment have been implemented in various projects around the country. For example, a project called "Shaping Eugene's Future" in Eugene, Oregon has included very visible public meetings. Participants were asked to envision what a "perfect" community would look like and then work together with other citizens to identify specific actions that can be taken to improve their community.

Public Journalism

Since the early 1990s, discussions of public journalism have appeared in newspapers and trade journals. Generally, it is portrayed as a new or revived relationship between news organizations and the public. Kramer suggest that it is based on two primary assumptions: self-government depends on citizen participation, and journalism can work toward better self-government and public life without sacrificing its "cherished traditions."[14] Advocates of public journalism often recommend the following changes in news gathering and reporting:

- increased utilization of locally-developed (rather than news wire service) stories that examine local implications of policy issues
- a shift in the sources for news stories to include more citizens as sources rather than dependency on "experts"
- an increased focus on issues and performance records rather than on a candidate's character or the horse race nature of political campaigns
- inclusion of more mobilizing information that provides citizens with the specific information that they need to be able to act on public issues.[15]

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[14] Staci D. Kramer, "Introduction," in *Civic Journalism: Six Case Studies*, eds. Jan Schaffer and Edward D. Miller (St. Petersburg, Fla.: The Poynter Center for Media Studies, 1995), p. 2.

[15] Sally McMillan, Macy Guppy, Bill Kunz, and Raul Reis, "Public Journalism: What Difference Does It Make to Editorial Content?" in *Assessing Public Journalism*, eds. Ed Lambeth, Phil Meyer and Esther Thorson (in press).

Public Places In Cyberspace

Some experiments in CMC-based community building have attempted to revitalize public participation in government. At the national level, the U.S. Department of Commerce recently sponsored a "National Electronic Open Meeting" in which public discourse about topics such as government services, benefits, and information was conducted via CMC. At the local level, cities have begun to build a virtual presence on the World Wide Web. Grossman suggests that, as we enter the 21st century, electronic democracy will emerge as a hybrid between the direct democracy of the ancient Greek city-states and the representative democracy that has evolved in the United States. He sees CMC as central to that transition.[16]

The National Commission for the Renewal of American Democracy (also known as Project Democracy) has identified five practices as critical to ensuring universal access to the technology that can help reconnect people and the political process:

- flexible hours of operation that accommodate people's busy lives through such technologies as computer-based voter registration
- convenient location for access to technology
- repetition of public information and flexible access to records of public activities
- adopting a "public language" that people can understand
- presentation of information in a context and at a level and depth that people can use.[17]

Computer-mediated communication tools enable public discourse but do not guarantee the re-emergence of a public sphere. Furthermore, the public sphere described by Habermas may or may not have existed. Carey suggests the public sphere in early America was, at the very least, flawed. "It was a public effectively restricted by class, race, and sex."[18] However, Carey suggests it is possible to revitalize the public sphere without returning it to its bourgeois roots. He believes members of "the public will begin to reawaken when they are addressed as a conversational partner and are encouraged to talk rather than sit passively as spectators."[19]

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[16] Lawrence K. Grossman, comments recorded at a May 1995 conference sponsored by the Nieman Foundation, available online: http://www.ai.mit.edu/projects/ppp/thesis/overview.html

[17] The National Commission for the Renewal of American Democracy, online document summarizing key practices for using technology to reconnect with citizens, available online: http://www.pin.org/~pin/library/sectech.html.

While CMC has the potential of creating a venue for this conversation, early indicators show that the medium may have the same demographic flaws as did the public sphere of early America. On average, Web users are upscale (25% have income over $80,000 per year), professional (50% are professional or managerial), and educated (64% have at least one college degree). Males represent 66% of Internet users and account for 77% of Internet usage.[20]

However, some cities seem to have created a venue for people who do not meet this high-end profile. Kirschner reports that the Public Electronic Network (PEN) in Santa Monica, California has been used successfully to address homelessness.[21] Based on his brief analysis of city-based CMC operations, Kirschner predicts that "during the present decade, readily accessible public information utilities are likely to become major contributors to the resuscitation and maintenance of civic infrastructure in U.S. communities."[22]

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[18] James Carey, "The Press and Public Discourse," *Kettering Review* (Winter 1992): 15.

[19] Ibid., 21.

[20] CommerceNet/Nielson.

[21] Bruce H. Kirschner, "Electronic Democracy in the 21st Century," *National Civic Review* (Fall, 1991): 409.

[22] Ibid., 406.

Analysis of City Web Sites

The meaning of community is still evolving in "third wave" societies. But the premise that communities need to be revitalized energizes many proponents of public deliberation and public judgment, public journalism, and public places in cyberspace. Cities and towns are in the unique position to offer citizens an opportunity to participate in both "actual" and "virtual" communities. By creating a "place" for public discourse on the World Wide Web, cities can expand the public sphere by reducing barriers to participation in local governance.

But are city Web sites providing a forum for public deliberation? Are they creating a "virtual town square"? Are they finding ways to include underprivileged groups? If so, one might conclude that such sites have the potential for revitalizing the public sphere. However, the focus of these Web sites might be on consumption and the marketplace. Hoffman, Novak, and Chatterjee report that commercial activity has become a central focus of the World Wide Web.[23] If this commercial activity is central to city Web sites, it may resemble the "buyable and sellable phony discourse" that Habermas deplored.

Methodology

The original research portion of this paper explores both structure and purpose of city Web sites. A random sample of 500 cities was drawn from the City.Net online list (See Appendix). Two coders analyzed content of those sites to determine if any information about city government and citizen involvement was included. Coders noted what, if any, community-building elements were included in the site. Intercoder reliability was checked for 10 percent of the sampled sites with a resulting coefficient of agreement of 97.2 percent.

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[23] Donna L. Hoffman, Thomas P. Novak, and Patrali Chatterjee, "Commercial Scenarios for the Web: Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of Computer Medicated Communication,* 1:3 (December 1995). Available online: http://www.usc.edu/dept/annenberg/vol1/issue3/hoffman.html.

Coders recorded the e-mail address for the manager of all Web sites that included community-building elements. A brief e-mail survey was sent to site managers asking them to provide information about who accesses the site, how the site is supported, how city Web sites impact on both media and local governments, and what goals drive the site development.

Of the 500 sites analyzed, 140 (28 percent) contained at least one community-building element. The remaining sites were focused on topics such as economic development, tourism, and entertainment. Of the 140 community-building sites, 20 did not include a working e-mail address. The survey was sent to 120 sites and 65 surveys were returned. Response rate for the survey was 54.2 percent. Surveys were sent and received by electronic mail.[24]

Mission and Purpose

Survey respondents were asked to provide a copy of the Web site's mission statement if one exists. Of the 65 survey respondents, 49 (75.4 percent) reported that they do not have a mission statement for the Web site. Several expressed concern about this lack in terms such as, "It is horrible to admit, but we do not have one!" And two of the respondents indicated that their cities are working on developing a mission statement for the Web site.

Only eight sites (12.3 percent) provided a mission statement for the city's online operations. Central elements of these mission statements related to providing information, and being readily available at all times. One city stated its mission this way: "to use emerging technologies, such as the Internet, to connect people with information, services and people."

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[24] Three respondents were not comfortable with e-mail and so returned surveys by snail mail.

Several of these mission statements also included "visitors" as a target group with phrases such as "creating a dynamic site for residents and visitors alike."

Another 12.3 percent of the respondents attached a copy of the city's overall mission. While these mission statements were often carefully worded and citizen-oriented, they made no mention of the role of online communication in helping the city fulfill its mission.

Respondents were also asked to give the primary reason(s) the city decided to create a Web site. The primary reason (38.5 percent) was to increase the city's ability to communicate effectively with citizens. Another 15.4 percent of respondents saw informing the citizens as one of two roles for city sites, with the other primary purpose being economic development and/or attracting tourists. One respondent summarized this dual role as follows: "To provide the citizens information about their city and to attract business." Only 12.3 percent of respondents saw economic development and tourism as the only goal of city Web sites. Those with such a focus often had global visions: "To promote the city and the area to the world."

Despite the "high-tech" image of the Internet, only three sites (4.6 percent) offered technological reasons for building a Web presence. All of the responses focus on the future impact of technology with statements such as "it is the communication tool of the future."

Finally, 23.1 percent of respondents gave answers reminiscent of Sir Mallory's famous reason for wanting to climb Mount Everest: "Because it is there." One respondent said, "It was easy and there was a demand for it." Another offered that "the local freenet went online in August 1995 and asked the City to have a presence." And yet another respondent admitted that the site was started for "no particular reason."

While the mere existence of tall mountains may inspire men to climb those peaks, it remains to be seen if the mere existence of a World Wide Web will inspire cities to create a public sphere in cyberspace. The lack of mission statements, and the number of cities who are building Web sites simply because the Internet exists, raises questions about the capacity for this new communication tool to facilitate a revitalization of public life.

Site Characteristics

Table 1 reports how often specific types of content were included in the 140 community-building Web sites. The potential for creation of interactive online communities may not be matching the current reality of city Web sites. Only three of the 140 sites analyzed (2.1 percent) provided an electronic community forum for interactive citizen participation. Furthermore, relatively few sites include voting information (13.5 percent) or an area for information about timely community issues (12.1 percent).

The two most-frequently found types of content are the digital equivalent of a phone book and a city brochure. While making this information readily accessible to all online citizens is admirable, digitizing this type of information does not seem to promote a revitalized sense of community. Furthermore, only 22.7 percent of these sites have moved from providing a digital phone book to encouraging electronic mail, which would seem to be the next logical step in building connections between city officials and citizens.

On the other hand, electronically posting information about times, locations, agendas and minutes of public meetings may foster citizen participation in the democratic process. This information, while technically "public," has historically been inaccessible except to those who have the "spare time" to make a trip to city hall and gather the appropriate documents. Citizens of third wave societies rarely have time to spare during the prime working years of adulthood.

Electronic posting of rules and regulations and budget/financial information hold a somewhat neutral position in community building. On the one hand, inclusion of this information in a Web site may suggest that the city is simply looking for electronic "filler" materials. On the other hand, this level of detailed information could prove useful to citizens who want to gain an in-depth understanding of their community.

Support, Cost, and Access

Table 2 reports data collected from the survey regarding annual operating costs, how these sites are supported, and who is accessing these sites. Because of the small sample, these findings should be considered as an early benchmark rather than predictive data.

Among the surveyed sites, the investment in online community building is relatively small.[25] Average annual cash cost devoted exclusively to developing and maintaining the site is only $7,500. The dominant sources of support are the city budget (46.2 percent) followed by volunteer efforts (17.1 percent). Commercial models characterized by advertising (1.9 percent) and user fees (1.6 percent) lag far behind public and volunteer efforts. This finding suggests that financial support for these sites may be more consistent with the model of building a public sphere than with the model of building consumption communities.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate which department(s) of city government were primarily responsible for creating and maintaining the Web site. The largest group (26.2 percent) indicated that the site did not involve any governmental department. Most of these were volunteer-oriented sites. The most frequently-mentioned departments were: information technology (20.0 percent), administrative departments such as the City Manager's office (15.4

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[25] In this context, it should be noted that surveyed sites include only those with community-building elements. Sixty-two percent of the total sample did not meet this criteria. Many of those non-included sites were supported by tourism and business groups and may have made a more sizable financial investment in their Web sites.

percent), and public information (7.7 percent). Another 15.4 percent of respondents reported a mix of departmental involvement. Typically, information services units are responsible for the technology, public information controls the "look and feel" of the Web site, and other departments add information relevant to their service areas. The remaining 15.4 percent of sites are maintained by a variety of departments including planning, libraries, finance, public safety, public works, and economic development.

An average of 827 people per month visit these city Web sites. While the average number of callers varies, only 26.4 percent of the sites estimate that they receive more than 1,000 visitors per month. Information about who is accessing the site is currently limited by technology. As one respondent noted, "Statistics are gathered by number of accesses or 'hits' to documents .... Hits are not distinguishable by person, so the same person could be responsible for all the hits or each hit could represent a different person."

This lack of measuring precision also leads to uncertainty about how many of those "hitting" the site are citizens looking for public information and how many are "cybercruisers" looking for their next vacation spot. In fact, most visitors' location is not known (56.7 percent) and for those visitors whose location can be identified, site administrators estimate that non-residents (20.9 percent) are more frequent visitors than residents (19.4 percent).

Communication Benefits and the Role of Traditional Media

Table 3 summarizes respondents' opinions about the benefits of online communication and the impact that online media will have on existing media. An overwhelming majority (64.6 percent) agreed with the statement that the primary benefit of online media for cities is that the new communication tool "provides an ideal way for the city to deliver information." Only 20.0 percent agreed with the statement that the medium "makes it easier for citizens and city officials to develop a dialogue." And a mere 4.6 percent agreed with the statement that online media "enables citizens to take an active role in shaping city government."

These traditional beliefs about the benefits of online communication may be related to perceptions about the role of traditional media. Few of the respondents (6.2 percent) believe that online media will replace traditional media. Most (66.2 percent) see online media as a targeted supplement to traditional media that will continue to provide an overview of public information. However, most respondents have high hopes that citizens will take advantage of this new targeted medium. Only 10.8 percent agreed with the statement that traditional media will continue to be the only source of city information for most citizens.

Some respondents suggested that online media enable activities outside the traditional realm of communication. One respondent wrote, "We consider our HomePage as a way of conducting business with the City, which isn't something offered by traditional mass media."

The Role of Volunteers

More than 60 percent of the sites report that they do not utilize volunteers in their efforts to bring cities and citizens online. For those that do use volunteers, one of the most frequent volunteer activities (16.9 percent) is design and maintenance of the site. This suggests that volunteer activity is central to these sites. Additionally, 21.5 percent of sites use volunteers in roles other than those defined in the survey. These respondents usually indicated a single volunteer is solely responsible for creation, maintenance, and support of the site. If "other roles" were added to the designing/maintaining role, we could conclude that 38.4 percent of the sites are volunteer-driven. The remaining volunteer activities are modestly represented in the sample: helping non-profit organizations get online (16.9 percent), training citizens to use online resources (13.8), and helping for-profit organizations get online (13.8).

Comments by some respondents indicated that there may be a growing trend toward cooperation between city staff and volunteers. For example, one respondent reported that the city planned to provide 32 public workstations in the next few months and that volunteers will be used to help train citizens in how to use online city information. However, as further detailed below, a majority of sites have no overlap between volunteer service and city support.

Web Site Models

Based on our analysis of 500 Web sites that have a connection to a local community, we have identified three primary types of city Web sites. The largest group (72.0 percent) contain no content related to community building and focus on topics such as economic development, tourism, and entertainment. The second group are "official" city sites. We labeled sites as official if they receive funding from the city and if one or more city department was involved in creation and maintenance of the site. Of the coded sites, 32.3 percent meet this criteria for official city sites. The third group are those sites that are primarily volunteer-driven. We labeled sites as volunteer if they utilize volunteers for at least one type of activity and if they indicate that at least some of their financial support comes from volunteers. Of the coded sites, 32.3 percent met this criteria for volunteer- oriented sites.

For the sake of clarifying the analysis, both official sites and volunteer sites were coded so as to be mutually exclusive. This means that a site supported by both the city budget and volunteer services would not be coded as either official or volunteer. Thus, 35.4 percent of the coded sites were not included in the analysis reported in Tables 5 and 6.[26]

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[26] We did run statistical tests that included "mixed" city-supported and volunteer-supported sites. In most cases, the mixed sites could be characterized as the "middle ground" between official and volunteer sites. The mixed sites tended to mask differences between city and volunteer sites. Furthermore, the additional degrees of freedom required for analysis of

The remainder of the data analysis compares the two types of sites about which we gathered data: official and volunteer. One of the first questions we wished to address was whether there is any difference in the quantity of material presented by these two types of sites. We constructed a scale with values ranging from 1-9 that sums each of the features coded in the content analysis (see Table 1). Using analysis of variance, we compared the means on this scale for the two site types. Official sites scored 4.85 and volunteer sites scored 3.05. The F score for this ANOVA is 4.67, which is significant at $p < .01$. This suggests official sites are significantly more likely to have a greater number of features than are volunteer-based sites.

Table 5 presents a cross-tabulation in which the frequency of feature appearance is analyzed for each site type. This analysis suggests which specific site features are most likely to be associated with each model. Several of the findings reported in Table 5 do not meet two-tailed tests of significance with an alpha of < .05. However, given the small size of the sample and the exploratory nature of the study, these findings may be suggestive of trends that can be tested in future studies using a larger data set.

It is no surprise that official sites are more likely to post agendas and minutes of meetings and city rules and regulations. City sponsorship probably leads to ready accessibility to these public documents. Access to e-mail addresses may also account for the more-frequent inclusion of this feedback mechanism. However, adding e-mail addresses could also reflect on a stronger interest in dialogue between citizens and officials. The creation of "hot topics" links on official sites also suggests that cities may be starting to go beyond just "shoveling" existing

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the three categories reduced the levels of significance. Thus, we elected to analyze only those sites in which there is no overlap between city and volunteer support.

documents onto the net. Many of these hot topics areas included potentially controversial issues about which citizens may wish to become more informed.

Table 6 presents a series of ANOVA tests that compare the population mean to the group mean for each of the two types of sites on several continuous variables. Official sites report both a higher annual cost and a higher average number of visitors per month than do volunteer sites. But despite the higher investment of city-supported sites, their construction cost is relatively low. Further, the relatively low number of average visitors per month suggests that online media is far from a mass medium for either official or volunteer sites.

No significant differences exist between the site types and the percent of local and non-local callers. This finding should be considered in light of the high number of site visitors from unknown locations. It would seem that even when more money is invested in the Web site and more people are drawn to it, there is still little accurate measurement of who is viewing the site. If site creators do not know who is coming to their sites, it would seem to be difficult to know what those cyber visitors want to find at the online location.

This inattention to audience characteristics and communication needs is further reflected in the three variables that measure respondents' beliefs about the primary benefits of online communication. Official sites are more likely than volunteer sites to see these benefits as primarily one-way. This is consistent with the public information model of communication that Grunig and Hunt suggest is typical of government organizations. This model of organizational communication focuses on producing information with little attention to the audience's communication needs.[27] While the few sites that do see truly interactive benefits to this new communication medium are all official sites, the total number of such forward-thinking sites is too small to be statistically significant. However, respondents for official sites are also more likely to agree with a conservative future view of online media (it provides a supplement for the more general overview provided in the traditional media). This suggests that many of these administrators may be adhering to older media models rather than embracing new communication paradigms.

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[27] James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt, *Managing Public Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 22.

As noted above, managers of volunteer sites are significantly less likely to see the primary benefits of online communication as one way. The data suggest that managers of volunteer-oriented sites may also be more likely to see two-way benefits to this new mode of communication. A larger sample size might find this relationship to be statistically significant. Managers of volunteer-supported sites also seem to take a more radical view of the relationship between this new medium and traditional media. Again, a larger sample might find this view to be statistically significant. Managers of volunteer sites seem to be less likely to believe that traditional media will continue to be the primary source of information for most citizens and more likely to believe that online media will replace traditional media.

In short, the data suggest that city-supported sites might have more features, invest more money in their Web sites, and attract more visitors. But volunteer sites might be driving a more interactive and revolutionary vision of online communication. It remains to be seen whether either resources or vision will be sufficient to recreate the reality of a public sphere in the virtual realm of cyberspace.

Summary

While the World Wide Web offers technological opportunity for revitalizing the public sphere in local communities, the technology itself does not predetermine this functionality. It is possible to use the Web to implement activities that have been designed to increase citizen participation in public life; it is also possible to use this technology to further the commercial interests that define consumption communities.

This study suggests that few cities have used the interactive capabilities of the Web to build the cyber-equivalent of a town square. Nor have they used the two-way communication capabilities of the Web in even such simple ways as facilitating e-mail communication between citizens and their public representatives. The question is why. Cost does not seem to be an inhibiting factor. However, city officials' general perceptions about the potential for two-way or truly interactive communications could be limiting Web developments.

Furthermore, those with a commercial vision seem to have taken the early lead in developing sites to represent local communities. A startling 72.0 percent of the sites did not include any of the basic elements of community-building information identified in Table 1. Many of these sites did seem to foster development of "consumption communities." Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Bureaus were responsible for the development of many of these sites. Other examples of "non-public" sites include pages for many of the small communities in South Dakota created by the state's Department of Tourism. A telephone cooperative in Iowa has built simple pages for many of that state's small communities. And some sites were strictly commercial in nature, including many cities whose only online representation was a site created by TicketMaster for the purpose of selling tickets to entertainment events.

Limitations of this study include the small sample size and the fact that the sample of sites was drawn from an online source that does not differentiate between commercial, official city-sponsored, and volunteer sites. Future research on the potentials of this new medium for revitalizing the public sphere might draw on a different source (for example a directory of city administrative offices) and send a postal survey to a sample of all cities to inquire about what they are doing and/or plan to do on the Web. Researchers could supplement this survey data with analysis of actual content. Methodologies should also be explored for drawing a sample of representative volunteer-oriented community sites.

While much remains to be learned about both the potential and the reality of the World Wide Web as a tool for building local community, it is clear that neither cost nor technological capability are barriers. Rheingold summarizes both the power and simplicity of interactive communication as a tool for social change:

> The potential social leverage comes from the power that ordinary citizens gain when they know how to connect two previously independent, mature, highly decentralized technologies: It took billions of dollars and decades to develop cheap personal computers. It took billions of dollars and more than a century to wire up the worldwide telecommunication network. With the right knowledge, and not too much of it, a ten-year-old kid today can plug these two vast, powerful, expensively developed technologies together for a few hundred dollars and instantly obtain a bully pulpit, the Library of Congress, and a world full of potential co-conspirators.[28]

The question remains whether those co-conspirators will revitalize public life or will capitalize on yet another opportunity to expand the influence of consumption communities.

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[28] Rheingold, 5.

Table 1

Frequency and Percent of Community-Building Sites Containing Specific Features (N= 140)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Addresses and/or phone numbers for contacting elected and/or appointed officials	112	79.4
General overview of city functions	97	68.8
Information about time and place of public meetings	63	44.7
Agendas and/or minutes of public meetings	48	34.3
Rules and regulations (e.g., city charter)	45	31.9
Budget and/or other information about city finances	39	27.7
E-mail for contacting elected and/or appointed officials	32	22.7
Voting information	19	13.5
"Hot topics" area for information on community issues	17	12.1
Community "forum" for interactive citizen participation	3	2.1

Table 2

Support, Cost, and Access to City Web Sites (N= 65)

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.
Approximate Annual Cash Cost	$7,500	13826.0
Percentage of support from city budget	46.2	48.0
Percentage of support from volunteer efforts	17.1	35.5
Percentage of support from other sources	11.2	29.9
Percentage of support from donations	9.8	28.1
Percentage of support from advertising	1.9	28.1
Percentage of support from user fees	1.6	12.4
Average number of callers per month	827	552.6
Average percent of callers who are residents	19.4	28.4
Average percent of callers who are not residents	21.0	29.8
Average percent of callers from unknown location	56.7	49.7

Table 3

Communication Benefits and the Role of Traditional Media (N= 65)

Variable	Percent	Std. Dev.
Communication benefits are primarily one-way	64.6	.48
Communication benefits are primarily two-way	20.0	.40
Online communication facilitates active communication and citizen involvement	4.6	.21
Online media are a targeted supplement for the more general information in traditional media	66.2	.24
Traditional media will remain primary source of information for most citizens	10.8	.31
Online media will replace traditional media as source for city information	6.2	.24

Table 4

The Role of Volunteers (N= 65)

Variable	Percent	Std. Dev.
No volunteer participation	61.5	.49
Volunteers have other roles	21.5	.41
Volunteers help design and/or maintain the site	16.9	.38
Volunteers help non-profit organizations get online	15.4	.36
Volunteers train citizens in using online resources	13.8	.35
Volunteers help for-profit companies get online	13.8	.35

Table 5

Cross-tabulations of Site Features and Site Models (N = 42, df = 1)

Variable	Official	Volunteer	chi-square
Addresses and/or phone numbers for contacting elected and/or appointed officials	85.7%	85.7%	.00
General overview of city functions	71.4%	76.2%	.73
Information about time and place of public meetings	57.1%	38.1%	.22
Agendas and/or minutes of public meetings	61.9%	23.8%	6.22**
Rules and regulations (e.g., city charter)	66.7%	23.8%	7.78**
Budget and/or other information about city finances	33.3%	28.6%	.74
E-mail for contacting elected and/or appointed officials	33.3%	9.5%	3.54*
Voting information	19.0%	14.3%	.17
"Hot topics" area for information on community issues	28.6%	0	7.00**
Community "forum" for interactive citizen participation	4.8%	4.8%	.00

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Note: Percentages reported in Table 5 are for dichotomous variables. Thus for each feature, the percentage indicates what percentage of the sites characterized by each model include the specific feature. For example, 85.7 percent of both the official and volunteer sites include address/phone information.

Table 6

Analysis of Variance of Site/Respondent Characteristics and Site Models

Variable (Population Mean)	Official	Volunteer	F (df between/ df within)
Approximate annual cash cost ($7,500)	$9,600	$857	4.14* (1/32)
Average number of callers per month (827)	1183	606	12.56*** (1/28)
Average percent of callers who are residents (19.4)	22.67	22.38	.00 (1/40)
Average percent of callers who are not residents (21.0)	29.71	16.43	1.92 (1/40)
Average percent of callers from unknown location (56.7)	47.62	61.19	.77 (1/40)
Percent who believe communication benefits are primarily one-way (64.6)	76.20	47.62	3.79* (1/40)
Percent who believe communication benefits are primarily two-way (20.0)	19.05	23.81	.13 (1/40)
Percent who believe communication benefits are primarily interactive (4.6)	4.8	0	1.0 (1/40)
Percent who believe online media are supplement for traditional media (66.2)	80.95	42.86	7.27** (1/40)
Percent who believe traditional media will remain primary source of information (10.8)	19.05	4.76	2.05 (1/40)
Percent who believe online media will replace traditional media (6.2)	4.76	9.52	.34 (1/40)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Appendix

A list of all United States cities with Web sites was drawn on 10 February 1996 from City.Net (http://www.city.net), a Portland-based "umbrella" site for city Web pages. The following list of 500 sites was drawn at random from that master document which listed 1,046 cities with an online presence.

Alabama
Huntsville
Mobile
Montgomery
Tuscaloosa

Alaska
Fairbanks
Juneau

Arizona
Apache Junction
Chandler
Flagstaff
Phoenix
Scottsdale
Sedona
Tucson

Arkansas
Fayetteville
Jacksonville
Little Rock
Mountain Home
Russellville

California
Antioch
Bakersfield
Bellflower
Belmont
Bishop
Brisbane
Calistoga
Campbell
Carlsbad
Corte Madera
Davis
Diamond Bar
Downey
El Centro
Fremont
Grover City
Hollywood
Irvine
La Costa
Live Oak
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Mount Shasta
Newark
Newport Beach
Pacifica
Palm Desert
Palm Springs
Pomona
Rancho Cucamonga
Redondo Beach
Riverside
San Bernardino
San Diego
San Jose
San Juan Capistrano
San Luis Obispo
San Mateo
San Rafael
Santa Clarita
Santa Rosa
Santee
Solvang
South Lake Tahoe
Sunnyvale
Tahoe Vista
Tehachapi
Torrance
Twentynine Palms
Ukiah
Valencia
Vallejo
Van Nuys
Venice Beach
West Hollywood
Yountville

Colorado
Breckenridge
Colorado Springs
Dolores
Durango
Evergreen
Golden
Gunnison
Lake City
Steamboat Springs
Thornton

Connecticut
Danbury
Greenwich
Manchester
New Haven
Oxford
Southington
Stamford
Weston

Delaware
Newark
Wilmington

District of Columbia
Washington

Florida
Altamonte Springs
Arcadia
Boca Raton
Boynton Beach
Bradenton
Cape Coral
Captiva
Daytona Beach
Fort Lauderdale
Fort Myers Beach
Ft. Walton-Destin
Gainesville
Indian Rocks Beach
Key Biscayne
Lehigh
Longboat Key
Marco Island
Miami
North Port
Panama City

Quincy
Sebastian
Siesta Key
St. Petersburg
Tallahassee
Titusville
Vero Beach
West Palm Beach

Georgia
Atlanta
Augusta
Conyers
Dalton
Duluth
Flowery Branch
Rome
Roswell
Savannah

Hawaii
Honolulu

Idaho
Boise
Caldwell
Idaho Falls
Lewiston
Moscow
Pocatello
Sun Valley

Illinois
Batavia
Berwyn
Carbondale
Champaign-Urbana
Chicago
Danville
Earlville
Galena
Glasford
Golden
Hanover
Macomb
Moline
Monmouth
Oak Park
Quincy
Rockford
Skokie
Springfield
Urbana
Westmont

Indiana
Anderson
Columbus
Evansville
Fort Wayne
Hebron
Kokomo
Munster
Seymour
West Lafayette

Iowa
Batavia
Burlington
Castana
Climbing Hill
Davenport
Dubuque
Earling
Essex
Hornick
Jacksonville
Keosauqua
Lake Mills
Marcus
Moville
North Liberty
Remsen
Rodney
Smithland
Sully
Turin
Walnut
West Bend
Westphalia

Kansas
Dodge City
Halstead
Kansas City
Lawrence
Lenexa
Manhattan
Merriam
Overland Park
Prairie Village

Kentucky
Lexington
Paducah
Prospect

Louisina
Baton Rouge
New Orleans
Opelousas

Maine
Camden
Houlton
Owl's Head
Waterville

Maryland
Annapolis
Columbia
Derwood
Gaithersburg
Takoma Park

Massachusetts
Agawam
Amherst
Andover
Arlington
Auburn
Eastham
Harwich
Hingham
Holyoke
Lexington
Lowell
Lynn
Marlborough
Maynard
Medfield
Newton
Northampton
Provincetown
Rockport
Spencer
Weymouth
Wilmington

Michigan
Ann Arbor
Auburn Hills
Boyne City
Cassopolis
Clinton
East Lansing
Flint
Frankenmuth
Gaylord
Grand Haven
Grand Rapids
Holland
Lansing
Midland
Mt. Pleasant
Muskegon
New Era
Pontiac
Rochester
Roseville

Minnesota
Austin
Duluth
Eagle Lake
Fairmont
Mankato
Minneapolis/Saint Paul
New Prague
Plymouth
Rochester
Saint Cloud

Mississippi
Greenville
Meridian
Oxford
Tunica
Vicksburg
Water Valley

Missouri
Branson
Clayton
Hannibal
Jefferson City
Kirksville
North Kansas City
Rolla
Springfield
Sullivan

Montana
Billings
Missoula

Nebraska
Cook
Gering
Hastings
Kimball
Lincoln
Nebraska City
Omaha
Papillion
Scottsbluff

Nevada
Las Vegas
Virginia City

New Hampshire
Brookline
Conway
Hampton Beach
Keene
Lebanon
Londonderry
Manchester
Portsmouth

New Jersey
Atlantic City
East Rutherford
Jersey City
Montclair
Newark
Ocean City
Old Bridge
Pennington
Summit
Teaneck
Trenton
Vernon

New Mexico
Alamogordo
Albuquerque
Santa Fe

New York
Albany
Auburn
Binghamton
Brookville
Caroline
Glens Falls
Johnson City
Lansing
Niagara Falls
Oyster Bay
Poughkeepsie
Pulaski
Schenectady
Syracuse
Utica
Westbury

North Carolina
Belmont
Chapel Hill
Hendersonville
Long Beach
Pinehurst
Sophia
Southport
Wake Forest
Waynesville
Wilmington
Winston-Salem
Wrightsville Beach

North Dakota
Fargo

Ohio
Bowling Green
Canton
Columbus
Cuyahoga Falls
Dayton
Kent
Marion
Northwood
Toledo
Westerville

Oklahoma
Edmond
Tecumseh

Oregon
Albany
Astoria
Beaverton
Buncom
Gresham
McMinnville
Roseburg
Salem
Stayton
Sublimity
Sunriver
Troutdale

Pennsylvania
Berwyn
Jim Thorpe
Johnstown
Mercersburg
Oil City
Philadelphia
Pittsburgh
Reading
Upper Darby
Waynesboro
Wilkes-Barre
Wilmerding

Rhode Island
Newport
Providence

South Carolina
Aiken
Anderson
Chapin
Columbia
Myrtle Beach
Rock Hill
Summerville

South Dakota
Aberdeen
Belle Fourche
Box Elder
Bruce
Canistota
Canton
Chamberlain
Deadwood
Eureka
Frankfort
Ft. Meade
Garretson
Hot Springs
Huron
Lead
Lemmon
Lower Brule
Madison
Milbank
Mobridge
Murdo
Pine Ridge
Rapid City
Sturgis
Wagner
Yankton

Tennessee
Chattanooga
Jackson
Knoxville
Nashville
Oak Ridge

Texas
Abilene
Amarillo
Austin
Bryan/College Station
Clear Lake
Corpus Christi
Dallas
Dallas/Fort Worth
El Paso
Euless
Fredericksburg
Huntsville
Kerrville
Longview
Lufkin
McAllen
Orange
Pearland
San Angelo
San Antonio
Temple
The Woodlands
Tyler
Waco
West

Utah
Heber City
Orem
Provo
Salt Lake City
St. George

Vermont
Brattleboro
Burlington
Morgan
Woodstock

Virgina
Abingdon
Alexandria
Danville
Lynchburg
Manassas
Marion
Occoquan
Portsmouth
Richmond
Staunton
Suffolk
Virginia Beach
Wytheville

Washington
Bellevue
Blaine
Everett
Federal Way
Friday Harbor
Kennewick
Mercer Island
Pasco
Selah
Sequim

West Virgina
Charles Town
Martinsburg
Morgantown

Wisconsin
Cadott
Menomonie
Milwaukee
Muskegon
Sheboygan
West Bend
Wisconsin Dells
Wisconsin Rapids

Wymoing
Buffalo
Casper
Evanston
Lander

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Drug Problems and Government Solutions:
A Frame Analysis of Front-Page Newspaper Headlines
About the Drug Issue, 1987-1994

Robert W. Leweke
Doctoral Student
111 St. Ayers Way
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 408-8204
rwl8535@email.unc.edu
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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the AEJMC National Conference
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Introduction: "The chief cause of problems is solutions"[1]

National budget outlays for the war on drugs continue to rise; much of the money goes to incarceration. According to one story, a record number of persons were imprisoned in 1994 by national, state and local authorities; many of those prisoners were drug offenders.[2] Over one million persons are in prison now in the U.S. One study estimates that "if the present rate of increase [in prison population] merely continues, rather than accelerating as it has during the past two decades" America's inmate population will surpass 2 million by the year 2000.[3]

This study will explore how media frames of the drug problem may have contributed to the harshness of the public policy toward drug offenders since the end of 1986. The public policy implications of this "framing" then will be discussed.

As an extension of the agenda-setting hypothesis,[4] the idea behind framing is that news media don't simply prompt the audience what issues to think about, but also prompt them *how* to think about those issues. As an expanding area of research, analysis of news frames is a fertile area that will provide important insights into the structure of drug policy coverage in the United States and into how the frames in that coverage may reinforce, or help change, the nature of drug policy.

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[1] *Town & Country*, May 1979, as quoted in Steven B. Duke and Albert C. Gross, 1993, p. 1.

[2] *Durham Herald-Sun*, "U.S. prisons in '94 held more than 1 million inmates, a new record." 10 August, 1995.

[3] Duke and Gross, 1993, p. 179.

[4] McCombs and Shaw, 1972.

Recent scholarship in political science has provided insights into the interplay between the political power of social groups targeted by public policy and the portrayals of those groups. These portrayals, or "social constructions," are defined as the stereotypes, "cultural characterizations or popular images" of policy target groups, which are "the persons or groups whose behavior and well-being are affected by public policy."[5]

Statement of Problem

Coverage of the "war" on drugs is an important area of study because of the threat it poses to public policy, American institutions, and individual liberties.[6] Perhaps most importantly, however, by studying how the American news media have packaged the drug war, we may better understand how media framing of public issues through social constructions affects public opinion and hence public policy (assuming a link between the latter two). Research questions include: In what ways have the news media been able to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular . . . treatment recommendation"[7] for the drug problem? What spin or slant did the media put on the drug problem, by highlighting some bits of information and ignoring others?

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[5] Schneider and Ingram, 1993, p. 334.

[6] For an excellent critique of drug prohibition, its effects and alternatives, see Ethan A. Nadelmann, "Drug Prohibition in the United States: Costs, Consequences, and Alternatives," *Science,* 245 (September 1989), pp. 939-46.

[7] Entman, 1993, p. 52.

The effects of the "drug war" from a public policy standpoint are many. They include the overcrowding of state and federal prisons caused by the influx of prisoners given long mandatory sentences for drug-related crimes. As law professors Steven B. Duke and Albert C. Gross recently pointed out,

> drug sentences represent the largest segment of growth for the penal population. . . . In 1989, drug prohibition forced our penal institutions to warehouse somewhere between 260,000 and 343,000 people, who otherwise would not have burdened that system. If we add those who were imprisoned not for drug crimes but for drug-related crimes (such as crimes to get drug money, or murders and assaults arising out of the drug business) we could include at least another 150,000 to the total. Thus, about half of our penal population is there because of drug prohibition.[8]

The cost in money and personnel devoted to drug law enforcement is enormous: the fiscal year 1993 federal budget set aside more than $6 billion for the "war," not including military efforts and enforcement by state and local agencies.[9] And the cost of the "drug war" diverts police, court and monetary resources from other public policy goals (including punishment of truly serious crimes such as rape and murder).[10]

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[8] Duke and Gross, 1993, p. 179.

[9] Vallance, 1993, p. 33.

[10] Johns and Borrero, 1991, p. 69; Moore, 1993, p. 251.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main agenda-setting work on the media and drug policy is the collection edited by mass communication researcher Pamela Shoemaker.[11] Several studies in it demonstrated the interplay between the print and broadcast media during drug coverage through 1986. But the limits of this agenda-setting research are severe. As explained by Donald Shaw and Maxwell McCombs, the purpose of the Shoemaker collection was anything but value-neutral:

> The agenda-setting role of the press is one of civic mobilization. The press helps focus our attention on the key problems of the days. It sets the agenda for public action. In a democratic society the press plays an indispensable role in helping achieve a working consensus of how public support and the resources of government and the private sector will be allocated to the concerns of the moment.[12]

As Jimmie L. Reeves and Richard Campbell have pointed out, the Shoemaker collection embraced the use of agenda-setting studies to further state drug control policies:

> Such social-scientific research tends to provide what is best described as a "top-down," administrator's picture of the news. Framed and composed from the point of view of a power bloc vying for the attention of a sluggish public, this research is often inspired by the idea of using the news media to achieve "civic mobilization."[13]

The purpose of this study is to move beyond the agenda-setting based research and apply the concept of framing to a more critical analysis of coverage of the drug war.

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[11] Shoemaker, ed., 1989.

[12] Shaw and McCombs, 1989, p. 119.

[13] Reeves and Campbell, 1994, p. 22.

Framing and public policy implications

Rather than focusing on how the media influence the amount of salience the public gives an issue, framing asks the question: How do the media give certain *perspectives* on an issue more salience than others? That is, how do the media "tell" us *how* to think about a given issue?

There are several different descriptions of the framing concept. Communication scholars have struggled with comparable definitions, although each relied on his or her own rationale for its causes and manifestations.[14] The most comprehensive definition of the concept of framing is that it describes the four important functions of news discourse: to use common cultural values to define public problems; to define the causes of those problems; to provide a valuative framework for judging the problems' causes and their effects; and to recommend and justify public treatments for those problems.[15] The implications of the framing of news discourse regarding public policy are dramatic. If subtle changes in framing of a public policy issue affect public support for treatment of that issue,[16] then the forces that determine the news frame may have a determining effect on the outcome of policy-making.[17]

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[14] Tuchman, 1978; Gitlin, 1980; Parenti, 1993.

[15] Entman, 1993, p. 52.

[16] Ibid, p. 57.

Researchers in political science also have recognized the impact on public policy of the rhetoric and stereotypes that media frames contain. Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram have linked the formation of public policy to how groups targeted by policy-makers are "socially constructed" in the media, popular culture and in political discourse.[18] They argue that "public officials commonly inflict punishment on negatively constructed groups who have little or no power, because they need fear no electoral retaliation from the group itself and because the general public approves of punishment for groups that it has constructed negatively."[19] Schneider and Ingram identify socially constructed "deviants" such as criminals and addicts as being in the worst position regarding their lack of political power and their negative construction in the broader culture.

The following research questions attempt to get at these social constructions, by asking how certain types of media used them to frame the drug problem and recommend solutions, using common cultural values embedded in the frame.

Research questions

Several studies have addressed the news treatment of the drug war in the 1980s, especially during the blitz of coverage in

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[17] Pan and Kosicki, 1993.

[18] Schneider and Ingram, 1993.

[19] Ibid, p. 336.

1986 at the height of the crack cocaine scare.[20] But researchers have not explored how the news media have framed the moral and treatment questions arising from the drug problem since then. The exploratory questions raised are: Since the end of 1986, how have the news media defined the drug problem in terms of common cultural values? What causes have they attributed to the problem? What moral or valuative framework have the news media provided for judging causes and effects? And finally, what public policy treatment or treatments have the news media recommended in response?[21] This analysis will go beyond previous studies of media coverage of the drug war in two ways: the time period will bring research more up to date, and the analysis of media frames will extend the theoretical basis for analyzing coverage beyond the agenda-setting model.

METHOD

The study addressed these questions through a content analysis of leading national newspapers. Headlines were chosen for analysis in order to enable a study of coverage over a longer period of time than would be possible in a more in-depth survey. Headlines also provide a good measure of the arrangement of key words or phrases, or syntactical structures, used by news media to call attention to the frame of the underlying news stories. As Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki point out, "a headline is the most salient cue to activate certain semantically related concepts in readers' minds; it is thus the most powerful framing device of the syntactical structure."[22] So by looking at headlines over the last several years, this initial exploratory study may both provide an initial survey of drug war frames over the last eight years, and serve as a guide for further research into news frames of the drug war in the stories themselves, and in other types of media, such as television.

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[20] See, for example: Merriam, 1989; Gonzenbach, 1992; Orcutt and Turner, 1993; Mackey-Kallis and Hahn, 1994; Reeves and Campbell, 1994.

[21] These questions follow Robert M. Entman's outline for the concept of framing, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Using the NEXIS online search program, news headlines in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times* were found using the key words "drug," "cocaine," and "crack" from 1987 through 1994.[23] Because of the large number of stories during this time period, the focus of the study was tightened to include only those headlines on the front page of the newspapers. Using the key words, stories not on the front page and not covering illicit drugs were removed. A population of 1444 stories were selected. To further reduce the number of headlines into a manageable size for one coder, the headlines were assigned a number in chronological order (by newspaper) from one to five. A systematic sample of every five headlines was then selected after a random start. The selection yielded a sample of 288 headlines, which were then coded.

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[22] Pan and Kosicki, 1993, p. 59.

[23] These papers have been found to lead other news media, including television, in drug coverage. Reese and Danielian, 1989.

The headline, date, and story origin were recorded, as well as whether the key words modified others and whether crime, violence and sports were involved. Any attribution of claims made in the headline were recorded, as well as the problem identified, whether a cause was given for the problem, and any solutions recommended for the problem.

Limitations

Coding just headlines limits the generalizations that can be made from the analysis. Often, a short headline will not say much. The coding lacks some information a fuller analysis (say, of the story itself) would yield, because of a larger percentage of "missing" data related to the limited units of analysis.

The method of gathering the headlines also is constraining. The online search program does not provide an image of the headline or story as it appeared in print, only a copy of the text. The system does not provide headline size, placement and prominence, or whether a photograph or illustration appeared with the story to make it more attractive, so the analysis cannot account for these differences.

Finally, the use of certain key words (in this case, "drug" "cocaine," and "crack") to get the population of headlines from which the sample was taken, may have skewed the results somewhat by focusing the frame on the substances themselves. However, earlier research indicates that these words may be common in stories about the drug problem during the study period.[24]

RESULTS

In a live nationally televised address to the nation in September 1989, President Bush announced his escalation of the "war on drugs." As Duke and Gross note, it was to be a war on "a class of inanimate objects--illicit drugs."[25] The findings of this study show that the nation's leading newspapers were also naming illicit drugs as a problem in themselves. But in the newspapers and in the war itself, drugs weren't the only targets: people were the real objects. And in terms of solutions, those recommended by the headlines followed the government line.

The analysis of these front-page headlines indicates that, first, the drug issue has turned from a national and international story in the 1980s, to a local one in the 1990s. Second, the key words ("drug," "cocaine," and "crack") were most often used as adjectives to modify other words in the headlines, providing an interplay between the key words and the modified words that symbolically framed the drug issue. Finally, the analysis will turn to the way the headlines overall framed the drug issue in terms of problems and solutions.

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[24] Bob Leweke and Steve Jackson. "News Narrative of the Drug War in *Newsweek*, 1989-1992." Paper presented at the National Media Literacy Conference, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, September 1995.

[25] Duke and Gross, 1993, p. xv.

Dateline

The place of origin of the front-page headlines tended to follow the frame provided by Bush's Andean strategy[26] early in the period. As Table 1 shows, international drug stories from the sample, datelined especially from Latin America, increased from an average of about 12% in 1987 to around 20% by 1989. But after the Bush administration's fierce anti-drug rhetoric of 1989 had died down somewhat, the attention of the nation's three major newspapers turned away from the national and international frame to one more local in nature. While national stories about the issue had decreased and then leveled off at around 30% by 1989, local headlines took the place of national and international stories, rising to nearly 50% of all stories in 1989, then climbing to around 60% from 1991 through the end of 1994.

This rise in local stories reflects in part both the issue being framed and the nature of the newspapers. The drug problem has often been framed in terms of larger inner-city problems as well as a problem of international interdiction. Some headlines even linked the international and local aspects to associate the problems of the inner-city with the "foreign" scourge of cocaine:

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[26] The Andean strategy as policy and as political rhetoric influenced U.S. drug policy in terms of geography as well as in terms of resources allocated. President Bush targeted the "source" countries for the cocaine supply (mainly Columbia and Peru) for military aid, and dramatically stepped up the U.S. military's role in training and interdiction. This had the dual effect of placing the problem outside U.S. borders, and also providing the defense department with another reason for funding as the Cold War waned. See Chapter 7, "Militarizing the Drug War," in Kraska, Peter B., ed. *Altered States of Mind: Critical Observations of the Drug War.* New York: Garland, 1993.

for example, one local headline in the *Los Angeles Times* read, "Southland; 8 Colombians, including woman, 71, arrested in Glendale drug bust."[27] The cities from which the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Washington Post* publish all experienced during the period what many perceived to be a wave of drug-related problems. After the rhetoric of the Andean strategy died down, the front-page drug headlines' return to local stories after 1989 had its roots in the focus on big city crime and social chaos, but the headlines sometimes looked outside the borders of America for scapegoats.

Table 1
Sources of front-page stories in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, 1987-1994.[28]

	Year							
Source	**1987**	**1988**	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**
Local	33.3% (8)	27.9% (17)	47.7% (41)	42.2% (19)	61.1% (11)	60.0% (12)	58.8% (10)	64.7% (11)
National	50.0 (12)	45.9 (28)	27.9 (24)	35.6 (16)	27.8 (5)	30.0 (6)	17.6 (3)	11.8 (2)
International	12.5 (3)	14.8 (9)	20.9 (18)	15.6 (7)	5.6 (1)	5.0 (1)	5.9 (1)	23.5 (4)
Not given	4.2 (1)	11.5 (7)	3.5 (3)	6.7 (3)	5.6 (1)	5.0 (1)	17.6 (3)	--- ---
Totals	100.0% (24)	100.1% (61)	100.0% (86)	100.1% (45)	100.1% (18)	100.0% (20)	99.9% (17)	100.0% (17)

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[27] 5 September 1989.

[28] Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

As Table 1 also indicates, the number of front-page stories (n=86) peaked in 1989, coinciding with the administration's attention to the problem. Over half of the headlines coded appeared in the years 1988-1990.

Drug words as cues for identifying problems and solutions

This part of the coding recorded whether the headline used the key word ("drug(s)," "cocaine," or "crack") as a modifier (usually an adjective) for another word. When it did, the modified word or words were recorded.

The use of "cocaine," "crack" or some other drug, or the word "drug" itself, in a headline turns out to be a common way to cue the reader's attention to the frame of the drug issue. Out of the 288 headlines in the sample, the key drug word modified another word directly following it in 229 headlines, or 79.5%.

The modified words carry strong cues that help define the central problems, causes and a moral judgment -- the frame -- of the issue. Overwhelmingly, the modified words framed the issue either in terms of criminals or addicts, or in dark metaphors. For example, drug words modify descriptives that call up images of illegality or the underworld, such as "baron," "smugglers/smuggling," "ring," and "gang(s)." For example, a *Los Angeles Times* story was headlined, "Anaheim fears drug turf wars among gangs."[29] "Use," "user," "takers," and "addict(s)" are also modified by drug words.

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[29] 6 February 1992.

Many modified words in this group tap stark images: for example, "nightmare," "violence," "slavery," "killing," and "scourge."[30] In this way the key drug words are used to link common cultural images of violence, death and evil to the drugs themselves, and to subtly imply the effects of the drugs by direct symbolic connections.

The second general category of these modified words contains descriptive words that imply solutions. These words fall into four general symbolic categories: "war" or military metaphors, law enforcement or prosecution, legislation or policy, and state surveillance. The majority of these words frame the solution in terms of the state and imply government action. For example, the military metaphors include "war," "crusade," "offensive," "battle(s)," "fight," and "seizure." Other modified words in this broad category of state solutions to drug problems include "court," "sentences," "program," "tests," "probe," and "control."

A third category, economic words, indicate the ironic use of symbols that link drugs with the worldwide market economy. For example, modified words in this category include "deal," "trade," "buy," "possession," "assets," and "producers." The word "money" is often used to symbolically demonstrate the taint of drugs, as in "Drug money suspected in cash car purchases."[31] The appearance of these relatively neutral or positive nouns and descriptives indicates how nouns denoting culturally accepted institutions and processes (such as "trade" or "seller") can be immediately delegitimized through guilt by association with a single modifying word ("*cocaine* trade", "*drug* seller"). It also demonstrates the inherent contradiction in political rhetoric that promotes "free enterprise" only in socially accepted spheres of economic activity; "drug dealers" are by definition not in the same moral and valuative boat as, say, antique dealers.

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[30] For example, "Urban emergency rooms: a cocaine nightmare." *New York Times*, 6 August 1989; Colombian 'day of love' broken by a long night of drug violence." *New York Times*, 17 September 1989.

[31] *Washington Post*, 26 December 1988.

Over time the frame indicated by the key drug words that modified these things and activities changed. Especially in 1990, the year after President Bush's nationally televised address and the initiation of the Andean strategy, the frame (as symbolized by the key modifiers) switched dramatically from one emphasizing the problems and their causes in 1989 (criminals, addicts and general mayhem) to one greatly stressing state solutions. The percentage of modified words in the "problems" category dropped from 36.8% to 17.4%, representing a decreased focus on the problems and their causes. In contrast, the emphasis on solutions moved even more decisively in the opposite direction, from 26.4% in 1989 to 63.0% of the modified words in 1990. By itself, this switch in emphasis from *problems* of crime, addiction and chaos to *solutions* of law enforcement, militarization and incarceration does not conclusively prove a link between the political situation in 1989 and the policy results in later years. But when taken with the frame of the headlines as a whole, the picture becomes clearer. The next section discusses the drug frame in terms of the problems the headlines identified.

The problem: People, drugs, and chaos

As Table 2 shows, the single most common problem named in the sampled headlines was people, either as individuals, families, or groups (criminal or non-criminal). This category made up about 28% of the total.[32] Other problems follow in descending order: some substance, usually the generic "drug," but sometimes one of the other key words, "crack" or "cocaine," or in a few cases alcohol or another illicit drug such as LSD or heroin.[33] About 22% of the headlines named drugs as the problem.

Third came the general category of mayhem or "social chaos" (19.8%): crime, violence, death, accidents and AIDS. Other sources of the problem were either the government's drug war itself (9.3%),[34] or in contrast, not enough drug war (or war poorly fought, 4.5%). Finally, 5.1% of the identified problems fit into a miscellaneous category. In 10.8% of the headlines coded, no problem was identified.

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[32] For example, "P.G. [Prince Georges County, MD] official probed in drug case; sources say head of council gave cocaine to officer." *Washington Post*, 13 January 1990. Note that the individuals are the problem, not the corruption spawned by the drug war.

[33] For example, "Wilder eyes drug tests on campus; task force named to probe narcotics, crime at colleges." *New York Times*, 3 April 1991. Note the automatic relationship between drugs and crime.

[34] See the next section for a more qualitative look at this category.

The fairly even emphasis on the three problems of social chaos (especially violence and crime), people and drugs is interesting, for together they make up about 70% of the total problems identified in the sample. The overall frame of the problem during the late 1980s and early 1990s then becomes a mixture of crime and violence associated with people taking, distributing or producing drugs. When this general frame is taken with that provided by the key words and the words they modify (see the previous section), the overall frame during this period becomes clearer. Social chaos ("drug violence," "crack babies") is linked to people associated with the substances, especially outlaws ("drug traffickers," "cocaine ring"). As the results show, the solutions to these problems of drug crime, violence and mayhem round out the frame in unmistakable terms. The next section discusses how even the few headlines that were critical of the drug war had trouble escaping this dominant frame.

The problem: Too much war?

Even the few headlines of the period that criticized the drug war itself or an aspect of it often did so in a half-hearted or indirect way. As the tables in Appendix A show, these headlines fell into three general categories: identification of constitutional rights violations or the extreme nature of the war, political or scandalous disputes stemming from the war, and criticism of the war watered down by the use of third parties to take responsibility for the attack.

As the first category shows, some headlines did indeed indicate strong skepticism of the drug war and the damage it was doing. The themes include arrests of innocent persons fitting police profiles, harsh prison terms, government theft of private property without trial, and a possible shift away from military tactics and imprisonment to treatment programs.

But even some of these headlines, notable for their scarcity among the hundreds of front-page stories about the drug war, are very tentative in their criticism and almost all rely on a government institution or official as a source for broaching the subject. For example, the last two headlines rely on either the "county" agency or the "U.S." government to "weigh" a "policy shift." Even when the government is the problem, the frame of solution is the government as well.

The second category of "critical" headlines, those reporting political disputes or scandals, treat the drug war as secondary to the juicy "irregularities" or "set ups" that are the real story. Similarly, the third category of critical headlines delegitimize the criticism by relying on third parties to make the attack. The first headline hides behind the label of "liberals" in Congress, a designation with complex connotations of "softness on crime" and minority status (even when the Democrats were in the majority). The third headline relies on unspecified "critics." But the most interesting headlines are the second and fourth, both criticizing the "racial inequity" of drug arrests and sentencing.

There are two symbolic processes of delegitimization at work in these two headlines. As in the other two headlines in this group, the attacks are made by "experts" or "critics," thus absolving the objective journalist from responsibility for questioning state policy. But notice that in the April 1990 *Los Angeles Times* headline, even though black Americans "feel the brunt of the drug war," it is "experts" who are saying so, not blacks themselves. This subtle symbolism not only delegitimizes criticism of the drug war, it relegates an entire race to the opinions of "experts."

Government solutions: take them or leave them

As Table 2 shows, nearly half of the headlines did not recommend a solution at all. This is most likely due to the tendency of headline writers (and journalists) to identify a situation "objectively" without advocating remedies. However, as critics have pointed out, objectivity tends to allow authorities to provide a frame. This in part accounts for the overwhelming reliance on government solutions, when solutions were recommended by the sampled headlines at all.

By far the largest category of solutions offered were those provided by state power. In about 40% of the headlines, the government had the answer, either through legislation, executive power, the courts, the military or law enforcement.[35] This last sub-category, police and law enforcement, alone accounted for about 21.9% of the solutions overall, and about 54% of the government solutions portrayed. In many headlines, the law enforcement and military solutions were rhetorically mixed, reflecting the militarization of civilian efforts in the drug war.[36] This also reflects mainstream journalism's reliance on the police and law enforcement officials for information about issues associated with crime. And as the previous section on problems showed, the drug problem was indeed one associated largely with crime.

Though making up a much smaller percentage of recommended solutions, drug testing of workers by government agencies as well as private businesses appeared regularly throughout the period. Sometimes, the two frames (state solutions and drug tests) were mixed: for example, one story reported the attorney general's support for drug testing teachers.[37] When this is taken with the reliance on government, and with the relative scarcity of other

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[35] Examples -- Legislative: "Drug bill passes, finishing business of 100th Congress." *New York Times*, 23 October 1988. Executive: "Audit faults drug tests at Interior; IG report uncovers many irregularities." *Washington Post*, 21 November 1992. Judicial: "Drug court cuts New York backlog." *New York Times*, 6 February 1988. Military: "Panel said to seek new military role in fight on drugs." *New York Times*, 2 July 1989. Law enforcement/police: "2 apartments in projects are seized in drug cases." *New York Times*, 28 April, 1988.

[36] For example, "Police barricades confront Pico-Union drug dealers." *Los Angeles Times*, 20 October 1989.

[37] "Meese says U.S. will support drug tests for new teachers." *New York Times*, 20 March 1987.

Table 2
Sources of the drug problem and their solutions, in front-page headlines of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, 1987-1994.[38]

Problems	
People	28.0%
Drugs	22.2
Social chaos	19.8
Drug war itself	9.3
Not enough drug war	4.5
Misc./other	5.1
No problem identified	10.8
Total	99.7%

Solutions	
The government	40.3%
Drug testing	4.5
Society, non-govt. groups	3.5
Medical treatment	2.1
Drug "peace"	.3
Misc./other	3.8
No solution recommended	45.5
Total	100.0

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[38] Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

solutions such as medical treatment or individual choice, it is no wonder that drug "peace" (either legalization or decriminalization) is recommended in just one headline and then only half-heartedly in the form of an "unspeakable" question.[39]

Conclusion

This analysis has empirically shown how three major newspapers, in the form of front-page headlines, have relied in recent years on a relatively limited range of imagery and symbolism to build the frame of the drug issue.

First, the emphasis on internationally datelined stories, in terms of the number of headlines, during the height of coverage from 1988 through 1990 provided a frame of militarization that may have influenced the frame in later stories focusing more on the local problem. The early placement of the problem beyond U.S. borders (partly due to the rhetoric of the Andean strategy) created the symbolic environment in which outsiders ("the enemy") could be blamed and a harsher policy using the military and law enforcement agencies could be more easily justified in later years.

Second, this research also lends further empirical support, in a new area (drug policy coverage), to the contributions to framing by Robert M. Entman. In particular, Entman's research has shown that although a dominant frame (for example, state solutions in the form of military interdiction and incarceration of offenders) may be opposed by other resistant frames (drug "peace"), this apparent "polysemy" in the news text will have little meaning for most readers, leaving the dominant frame as the salient policy-definer for all but the most thoroughly informed readers.[40] This is also underscored by the raw numbers: the large proportion of headlines within the dominant frame, and the tiny proportion of headlines outside it. After the peak of coverage in the late 1980s, subsequent sporadic challenges to the frame constructed then were simply too little, too late to tear it down.

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[39] "The Unspeakable Is Debated: Should Drugs Be Legalized?" The *New York Times*, 15 May, 1988.

One way these headlines constructed drug problems and solutions was to accept the dominant frame of criminality the state constructed around the drug issue, and then to apply that characterization to the people involved. In this mediated frame, anyone caught up in the criminal justice system in a drug-related crime (and caught by a headline somewhere along the way) then becomes an example of the evils that supposedly flow from drugs, and the vicious cycle continues.

Finally, previous research on framing has largely focused on news coverage of particular events, such as airplane shootdowns and the Gulf War. In studying headlines about the drug issue from 1987 through 1994, this analysis has demonstrated that the theory of framing can be used as a guide to study the coverage of a broad policy issue over time, as well as a particular event.

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[40] Entman, 1991.

In addition, an analysis of headlines enables the researcher to focus more on key words that help define the frame.

Future research should focus more on exposing the links between the state and the print and broadcast media to explore in greater depth how media frames are adopted, particularly regarding the drug issue. This might include comparative analyses of key official speeches and documents by officials in the drug war from the president on down, and news stories generated by these sources. Research should also look at the effects the frame leaves in its "wake" by studying public opinion changes (as well as the frames in the public opinion poll questions themselves) to track the effects of framing on public opinion and policy.

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Appendix A

Main categories of front-page headlines critical of the drug war in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, 1987-1994.

Extremism in the war effort

"Airport Drug Efforts Snaring Innocents Who Fit 'Profiles'"
New York Times, 20 February, 1990

"Drug Program's Tough Tactics Draw Fire"
Los Angeles Times, 24 March, 1990

"Life in Prison For Cocaine Possession?; High Court Weighing Strict Michigan Law"
Washington Post, 5 November, 1990

"Long LSD Prison Terms--It's All In the Packaging; Law Can Mean Decades In Prison For Minuscule Amounts. DEA Official Says No Change Is Needed"
Los Angeles Times, 27 July, 1992

"Seizure of Assets Leaves Casualties In War on Drugs; People Who Were Never Arrested, Much Less Convicted, Have Had Property Taken"
Los Angeles Times, 14 October, 1992

"2 Judges Decline Drug Cases, Protesting Sentencing Rules"
New York Times, 17 April, 1993

"County Drug Policy Shift Weighed; Some Officials Consider a Plan To Offer Nonviolent Offenders Treatment Instead of Jail"
Los Angeles Times, 17 May, 1993

"U.S. Considers Shift In Drug War; Military Interdiction Called a Failure"
Washington Post, 16 September, 1993

Political Disputes or Scandals

"Drug Buy Set Up For Bush Speech; DA Lured Seller To Lafayette Park"
Washington Post, 22 September, 1989

"Saudi King Gave $1 Million For Mrs. Reagan's Drug War; Fund Was Moved To California At Term's End"
Washington Post, 7 March, 1990

"Audit Faults Drug Tests At Interior; IG Report uncovers Many Irregularities"
Washington post, 21 November, 1992

Third Parties Make the Attack

"**Liberals** Call House Drug Bill An Assault on the Constitution; Sweeping Changes In Justice System Backed"
Washington Post, 19 September, 1988

"Blacks Feel Brunt of Drug War; About 80% of Users Are White, **Experts Say**, But the Majority of Those Arrested Are Black"
Los Angeles Times, 22 April, 1990

"4th Amendment Is Trampled In Drug Offensive, **Critics Say**; More Courts Upholding Random Searches"
Washington Post, 7 May, 1990

"Harsher Crack Sentences Criticized As Racial Inequity; Mandatory Penalties Are Unfair to Blacks, **Critics Say**"
Los Angeles Times, 23 November, 1992

Appendix B: Content Analysis Date __/__/__ No._______

Headline:____

____

____

Publication (circle): 1. nytimes 2.wpost 3.latimes

Date of story:__/__/__

Length (in words): __________

Type (circle): 1.local 2.national 3.international 4.other/na

Key Words in Head: "Cocaine" (Y1/N2) "Crack" (Y1/N2)
"Drug(s)" (Y1/N2) Other____________________

Does the key word(s) modify another? (Y1/N1)

If yes, write modified word(s) here____________________________

Is crime involved? (Y1/N2)

Is violence involved? (Y1/N2)

Are sports involved? (Y1/N2)

Is statement or claim in headline *attributed* to someone? (Y1/N2)

If yes, who?____

PROBLEM: Is there a problem? (Y1/N2)

If yes, is it: 1.individual 2.family 3.non-criminal group
4.criminal group/organization 5.some social force
6.some substance 7.the drug war itself
8.other______________________

Is there a CAUSE for above problem? (Y1/N2/na)

If yes, what is it?____

SOLUTION: Is there a solution? (Y1/N2/na)

If yes, is solution: 1.legislative 2.executive (gov./president)
3.judicial 4.military 5.law enf./police
6.individual 7.family 8.society/other group
9.Medical/professional treatment
10.decriminalization/legalization/"peace"
11.other____

COMMENTS:

The Press and the Not-So-Mean Streets: The Relative Influence of the Media on Public Knowledge of Crime Rates

Thomas J. Johnson
Associate Professor

School of Journalism
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901
(618) 453-3279
TJohnson@siu.edu

Jayanthi Sothirajah
Doctoral Candidate

School of Journalism
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL 62901
(501) 663-1740

Mahmoud A. M. Braima
Assistant Professor

Academic Affairs
Philander Smith College
Little Rock, AR 72202
(501) 370-5217

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The Press and the Not-So-Mean Streets: The Relative Influence of the Media on Public Knowledge of Crime Rates

Criminologists were puzzled. While statistics indicated that levels of crime, particularly violent crimes, were declining during the 1990s, fear of crime was escalating. A Times/CNN poll in early 1995 indicated that 89 percent of the public thought that the crime problem was growing worse, up from 61 percent two years before. Crime experts offered several explanations for this apparent paradox: The public was responding to three decades of rising crime rates; the public perceived that crime was no longer restricted to the cities, but now pervaded the suburbs and small towns; and falling homicide solution rates suggested that the police could no longer effectively apprehend criminals.[1]

However, researchers and public officials offered another explanation. They held the media at least partly responsible for the public's exaggerated perceptions of the extent of the crime problem because citizens rely heavily on the media for crime news, and the media's emphasis on violent crime produces unrealistic levels of fear among the public.[2]

While several studies have examined the relationship between media use and perceptions of the crime problem, few studies have directly investigated whether the media contribute to, or hinder, the acquisition of accurate crime knowledge. Most previous works either compare official crime statistics to how the media reported certain crimes to look for correspondences or ask individuals to estimate rates of various crimes and compare their estimations to media reports and official crime statistics to see whether public estimates most resemble the media or official statistics.

These studies raise a paradox of their own. While research suggests that media increases knowledge of issues, it also suggests that the media do not paint an accurate portrait of the crime problem. Therefore, should increased media use improve the public's ability to estimate crime rates or hinder that process? This study will employ regression analysis to examine the extent to which media use, as well as background characteristics and fear of crime, predict the public's ability to correctly estimate the number of burglaries and violent crimes in a community.

Researchers agree that crime news and entertainment is ubiquitous. Skogan and Maxfield found that nearly half of their respondents reported reading or viewing a crime story the previous evening.[3] Studies indicate that crime news makes up anywhere from 4 to 33 percent of the in newspapers newshole[4] and is the fourth largest news topic behind general interest news, sports and business.[5] Furthermore, because few people have directly witnessed crimes or have been victimized themselves, the public relies heavily on the media to learn about the amount and type of crime in society. Graber discovered that 95 percent of those surveyed rated the media as their main source of information about crime, although 38 percent listed another source of information and 14 percent reported personal involvement.[6]

However, researchers also agree that the media portray an inaccurate picture of both the amount and types of crimes in society. Media attention to crime does not reflect actual crime rates. For instance, Jones matched coverage in two metro newspaper with data from FBI Uniform Crime Reports and found that coverage did not correspond with the rise and fall of crimes during the study period.[7] Indeed, studies suggest that media coverage is almost inversely related to a crime's occurrence. The media tend to underplay petty, nonviolent and white-collar crimes while overemphasizing sensational, unusual and violent crimes.[8] For instance, Graber found that while murder made up only 0.2 percent of crime known to police, it constituted 26.2 percent of crime coverage.[9] Antunes and Hurley reported an even greater gap between the number of murders and percentage of murder stories appearing in two Houston newspapers.[10] Researchers suggest that news values, source relations and the routines of newsgathering help explain why the press covers crime extensively and why that coverage focuses on violent crimes.[11]

Researchers are split, however, on whether public perceptions of the extent of the crime problem mirrors media coverage or official crime statistics. As early as 1952, Davis offered evidence to suggest that the public's perceptions of crime more closely reflected newspaper coverage than official measurements,[12] findings that have been supported by other researchers.[13] However, studies by Roshier[14] and Croll[15] found the opposite: public estimates of crime resembled official government statistics more than newspaper reports.

Only a few studies have specifically examined the degree to which amount of media coverage influences public estimation of crime rates. While researchers are split on whether media use is linked to personal estimations of crime risks and the probability of victimization,[16] they do agree that media use influences crime rate estimations.[17] Tyler discovered that exposure to mass media, but not demographic factors, were related to estimates of crime rates, with high users more likely to argue that crime rates are high.[18] Doob and MacDonald found that television viewing was correlated with several crime rate estimations, such as the proportion of assaults against members of racial minorities, the number of murders taking place in metropolitan Toronto and the number of those murdered in Toronto subways. In each case, heavy television viewing was linked to high estimations.[19] The public frequently overestimates crime rates; Doob and Roberts found that 88 percent of respondents overestimated the frequency of violent crimes and credited that to the media's obsession with covering those crimes.[20] Similarly, Gebotys, Roberts and DasGupta discovered that frequency of television news exposure was linked to perceptions of the seriousness of eight crimes.[21] However, these studies only examined the degree to which media use was related to crime estimations, not the degree to which media use related to the ability to make *correct* crime rate predictions. No studies could be found that specifically examined the degree to which media use was linked to knowledge of crime rates.

However, numerous studies have shown that media use is positively related to gains in political knowledge, although results may depend on what media are examined and how they are measured. Studies have consistently found that newspaper reading is related to increased political knowledge,[22] although recent studies have not found such an effect for radio.[23] Researchers have found the relationship between television use and political knowledge depends on how television use is measured. For instance, several studies have indicated that television exposure is negatively correlated with knowledge.[24] However, research suggests that exposure to particular content, such as public affairs news, is a stronger predictor of political knowledge than simple exposure.[25] Similarly, studies have found that attention to television news contributes more to political knowledge than simple exposure because one can watch television because it is on without paying particular attention to it.[26]

Because the relationship between media use and knowledge depends on what media measure one uses, McLeod and McDonald[27] have advocated that researchers use multiple measures of media use behaviors. This study will employ four: general exposure, content exposure, media attention and crime information seeking. This study will also examine several types of media: television, newspapers, magazines and radio.

Just as few researchers have examined how media use contributes to crime knowledge, few studies have looked at how other factors influence estimations of crime rates. Studies do suggest that while those who live in higher crime areas do express a greater fear of crime than those in safer areas,[28] judgments about personal crime risks do not reflect actual crime conditions.[29] In particular, studies have consistently found that women and the elderly report high levels of fear of crime even though their victimization rates are low.[30] Similarly, Tyler found no relationship between level of education and income, gender, race and age and estimations of crime rates.[31]

This study will examine the following questions:

1. Will media use improve or hinder the public's ability to correctly predict crime rates after controlling for background characteristics and fear of crime?

2. Will different media have different influences on public knowledge of crime rates?

3. Will different media use measures have different influences on public knowledge of crime rates?

Method

The Sample

Telephone interviews with 311 adults living in the greater metropolitan area of Little Rock, Arkansas were conducted in April 1994, a time when the problem of crime and violence was receiving considerable attention in national and local news media. The survey was conducted by trained undergraduate students enrolled in an advanced undergraduate research method for the social sciences course. The sample was drawn from local exchanges using random digit dialing procedures.

Demographically, about 40% of the respondents were men and 60% were women. In terms of age, the respondents' age ranged between 18 and 91 years with a mean of 43 and a mode of 47 years. Forty percent of the respondents attained a high school certificate or less, 42% finished college, 8% completed a masters' degree, 8% had a professional or doctoral degree and 2% refused to answer the question.

Measurement of Variables and Analyses

Independent variables included measures of crime information seeking, general exposure, content exposure to crime news and attention to crime. Several demographic and psychological variables were also included in the analyses as independent variables. The demographic variables included were gender, race, age and annual income, while the psychological variables were measures of fear of several specific crimes. The dependent variables were the respondents' estimates on the percentage of homes burglarized and percentage of victims of violent crimes.

Crime information seeking. Respondents were asked: Which media do you search for stories about crime in Little Rock? I look for crime stories (a) in newspapers, (b) local television news, (c) magazines, and (d) radio news.

General exposure. Respondents were asked about the frequency of their use of newspapers, magazines and radio. They were also asked to estimate the number of hours they spent watching television during prime time.

Crime content exposure. Respondents were asked: How much have you read or heard about crime and violence in Little Rock within the last month or so in (a) newspapers, (b) from television, (c) from radio, and (d) in magazines?

Crime attention. Respondents were asked: Suppose you come across a story or something about crime and violence tomorrow, compared with other stories you usually read or watch, how much attention would you pay to the story about crime in (a) newspapers, (b) television, (c) magazines, and (d) radio?

A *Fear of specific crimes* index was developed by asking respondents of their concern for being victims of murder, rape, assault, robbery and burglary.

Information seeking of crime stories were coded Yes (1) No (0). Crime content exposure and crime attention were coded A great deal (5), Quite a bit (4), Some (3), A little (2), and Nothing at all (1). Fear of crime were also gauged on a five-point scale of strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Bureau of Justice Statistics indicate that only about 2 percent of the homes were burglarized in the State of Arkansas in 1993 and the rate of violent crimes was about two in a thousand.[32] The estimates of the respondents were coded such that people with lower estimates received higher scores and vice versa. Estimates of less than 5 percent received 10 points; estimates that ranged between 6 and 10 percent received 9 points; estimates that ranged between 11 and 20 received 8 points; etc.

Two sets of multiple regression analyses were run. In the first set, the two dependent variables were alternately regressed on the media use variables thereby creating eight regression models. Similarly, after including the demographic and psychological variables, the models were run again, thus creating eight additional regression models.

Results

The results for estimations of crime rates demonstrate that the public has a distorted image of the frequency of crime (Table 1 and 2). While the plurality correctly guessed that both the percentage of homes burglarized in the past year (Table 1) and the percentage of men and women who victims of violent crime (Table 2) were both below 5 percent, most predictions were highly inaccurate. For instance, more than 25 percent of respondents thought that at least half of homes in Arkansas had been burglarized and half of the citizens had been victimized by violent crimes within the past year.

However, there was limited evidence that frequency of media use contributed to the poor crime estimates (Tables 3 and 4).

Only four of the 16 relationships between media use and public knowledge of burglary rates proved significant (Table 3). General radio exposure, exposure to crime and violence on radio, and seeking out crime information on the radio were all negatively related to estimates of burglary rates, indicating that radio use hinders one's ability to make accurate crime predictions. On the other hand, information seeking from television improved one's ability to make accurate burglary estimates.

Media use had even less influence of the public's ability to make correct estimations of violent crime rates. (Table 4). Only information seeking from radio, general exposure to television, and content exposure to magazines proved significant. In each case, exposure to media hampered an individual's ability to make accurate crime predictions.

When the demographic and psychological variables were added to the equations, most of the previously significant variables were supported. However, two media use variables failed to correlate to the public estimates of violent crimes: information seeking from radio and general exposure to television. Also income emerged as a consistent correlate in estimates of burglary and violent crimes. Concern for being a victim of assault also correlated with estimates of burglary and violent crimes, although concerns for other crimes did not prove significant. (Tables 5 and 6).

Discussion

Past studies of media use, crime and knowledge gain have suggested a paradox that this work attempted to address: While research suggests that media increase knowledge of issues, it also suggests that the media attention to crime does not reflect actual crime rates. Specifically, this study explored whether increased media use improved or hindered the public's ability to estimate crime rates correctly.

This study demonstrates that the public does indeed have a skewed picture of the extent of the crime problem. While a plurality of individuals did correctly estimate the incidents of burglary and violent crime to within 5 percent, most estimates were far off the mark. For instance, approximately 13 percent thought that between 60 and 70 percent homes had been burglarized and an equal percentage thought between 60 and 70 percent of adults had fallen victim to violent crime in the past year. The percentage of those who thought at least half of homes had been burglarized and half the adults had been victimized by violent crimes was nearly identical to those who correctly identified these crime rates as being below 5 percent.

However, it is not clear from this study that the media create this skewed picture. Only seven of the possible 32 relationships between the media use and crime estimates were significant, suggesting that in general the media neither improved nor hindered people's abilities to make correct crime estimates. However, six of the seven significant correlations were negative, indicating that increased exposure to the media was more likely to hamper the public's ability to accurately estimate burglary and violent crime rates than help it.

Past correlational studies have found some evidence that the media influence the public's perceptions of crime,[33] although the results are far from conclusive.[34] Results from this study, which employs regression analysis, does little to resolve the question of whether media use is linked to estimations of crime rates.

Results from this study, however, parallel several studies that have found no relationship between media use and fear of crime.[35] Skogan and Maxfield suggest several reasons why relationships between media message and crime attitudes might not be significant, reasons that might equally apply to the weak relationship between media use and crime knowledge. The media typically focus on crime in more distant places rather than on crime in in one's neighborhood, making it difficult to accurately gauge one's risk of crime. Similarly, media stories about crime often do not specify details about crimes such as where it occurred, when it occurred or characteristics about the victim. This suggests the media, despite their abundance of stories about crime, do not provide enough information about the crimes themselves or the frequency of their occurrence to allow an individual to make a meaningful estimate of crime rates.[36] Also, while evidence suggests that the media are the public's main source of crime, it may not be the most influential. Studies have found that personal conversations about crime is a much stronger predictor of fear of crime than media use.[37] This suggests that people may rely more on conversations with friends and neighbors than the media to assess levels of crime.

Researchers have criticized past media use and crime studies for focusing largely on television use to the exclusion of other media and for generally relying on the weakest measure of media use: general exposure.[38]

This study found that different media produced different results. While past studies have consistently found that newspaper use contributes to political knowledge,[39] this study found no relationship between newspaper reading and crime estimates. Similarly, while past studies have found that radio use has little impact on information gain,[40] this study found that radio use significantly hampers an individual's ability to make accurate crime predictions. The results for radio were not surprising. Most radio stations provide little in the way of news. However, crime is a staple of radio news because crime news can be easily gleaned through checking the police scanner and calling the station. The relative abundance of crime news on radio may lead to the perception than crime is rampant. The stories themselves are too short and superficial to allow the listener to get an accurate gauge of the amount of crime.

Past studies have found different effects of the media depending on how media use is measured.[41] This study also found differences, although not as profound as some other studies. For instance, while searching out crime information on television improved one's ability to make accurate crime predictions, general television exposure hindered such abilities. This study supports several others that have found that general exposure is the weakest measure of media use;[42] the one significant relationship became insignificant after controlling for other factors. Actively searching out crime information was the strongest predictor of making accurate crime estimates, although information seeking hurt rather than helped people's abilities to make accurate crime estimations. However, while several studies have touted attention to the media, particularly television, as a strong predictor of information gain,[43] attention measures were largely unrelated to crime knowledge.

However, there is a distinct difference between this study and ones that have examine the relationship between media use and political information gain. An unspoken assumption of previous studies is that despite the cacophony of misleading political ads and the media's obsession with covering the horse race over substance, an individual *can* acquire accurate and substantive political information through the media. This assumption does not necessarily hold true for crime news. As noted earlier, past studies have found that the media provide a highly inaccurate picture of the crime problem, focusing on more sensational, unusual and violent crimes such as murder while underplaying petty, nonviolent and white-collar crimes. Furthermore, the media do not provide enough information about crimes in the stories it does report to allow the public to make accurate crime predictions.

This study, then, provides an unflattering portrait of the media and crime reporting. The public seriously overestimates the extent of the crime problem which undoubtedly increases the public's fear of crime. Yet the media do little to help the public understand the extent of the crime problem. If anything, the media hamper the public's ability to make crime predictions. This suggests that the media need to improve their crime coverage. The media should de-emphasize the reporting of individual crimes, particularly the relatively infrequent violent crimes, both in terms of amount of coverage and placement of such stories. The media should take particular care not to suggest that a spate of similar crimes constitute a crime wave.[44] The media can take several positive steps to improve crime coverage. First, they can provide more information on rates of crime to allow the public to make more accurate crime estimates. Second, they can focus less on individual crimes and instead examine root causes of crime and as well as what steps can be taken both to reduce crime in general and to reduce people's chances of being a crime victim. Third, the media can provide coverage of community programs and services that have been successful in reducing violence and crime. Similarly, journalists can promote community activities that get young people involved and run positive stories about youth who have turned away from crime. Finally, when the media do report individual crimes, they need to provide more detailed information such as where the crime occurred and when it happened so that the public can more accurate assess the level of crime in their neighborhood as well as decide on what steps they can take to avoid becoming a victim of crime.

This study examined how media use influenced the ability to make accurate crime predictions, controlling for various demographic and psychological factors. The generally weak relationship between media use and crime predictions suggests that other factors are at work. Future studies should include other possible sources of crime information, such as interpersonal communication and personal experience with crime, to more fully investigate public misperceptions about the extent of the crime problem in this country.

TABLE 1

*Estimates of the Percentage of the Homes Burglarized in the Last Year**

Estimate	Percentage
0-5 percent	30.9
6-10 percent	4.5
11-20 percent	4.2
21-30 percent	2.3
31-40 percent	11.9
41-50 percent	9.0
51-60 percent	10.0
61-70 percent	13.5
71-80 percent	7.7
81-99 percent	5.1
	100%
N=	311

*Fewer than 2 percent of homes were burglarized in Arkansas in 1993

TABLE 2

*Estimates of the Number of Men and Women who were Victims of Violent Crimes Last Year**

Estimate	Percentage
0-5 percent	25.4%
6-10 percent	4.8
11-20 percent	7.1
21-30 percent	8.7
31-40 percent	16.1
41-50 percent	10.1
51-60 percent	8.4
61-70 percent	13.2
71-80 percent	3.5
81-99 percent	1.9
	100%
N=	311

*Approximately 2 in every thousand men and women were a victim of violent crime in Arkansas in 1993.

TABLE 3
Influence of the Media on Public Knowledge of Percentage of Burglary

	Information Seeking	General Exposure	Content Exposure	Attention
Newspapers	-.006	-.03	.04	.02
Television	.17*	-.07	.03	-.001
Magazines	.11	.05	-.06	.10
Radio	-.17**	-.08	-.19**	-.24***
R Square	.05	.01	.04	.05
Adjusted R Square	.03	.00	.03	.03
Sig. of Change	.005	.339	.007	.004

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

TABLE 4

Influence of the Media on Public Knowledge of Percentage of Violent Crimes

	Information Seeking	General Exposure	Content Exposure	Attention
Newspapers	-.001	-.03	.01	.08
Television	.09	-.12*	.05	.003
Magazines	.05	.001	-.15*	-.08
Radio	-.12*	-.08	-.09	-.11
R Square	.02	.02	.03	.02
Adjusted R Square	.01	.01	.02	.001
Sig. of Change	.223	.152	.018	.198

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

TABLE 5
Influence of the Media, Psychological and Demographic Variables on Public Knowledge of Percentage of Burglary

	Information Seeking	General Exposure	Content Exposure	Attention
Newspapers	-.01	-.08	.03	-.01
Television	.18**	.03	-.06	.001
Magazines	.08	.105	-.03	.11
Radio	-.17**	-.10	-.22**	-.22***
Concern for Murder	-.09	-.08	-.06	-.08
Concern for Assault	.34**	.41***	.39***	.36***
Concern for Robbery	-.04	-.08	-.11	-.08
Concern for Burglary	-.13	-.09	-.09	-.09
Concern for Rape	-.12	-.17*	-.15	-.13
Gender	.06	.07	.08	.06
Race	-.01	-.04	-.04	-.02
Age	-.04	-.02	-.07	-.05
Income	.16*	.17**	.16**	.13*
R Square	.12	.09	.12	.11
Adjusted R Square	.07	.05	.08	.07
Sig. of Change	.002	.021	.001	.002

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

TABLE 6

Influence of the Media, Psychological and Demographic Variables on Public Knowledge of Percentage of Violent Crimes

	Information Seeking	General Exposure	Content Exposure	Attention
Newspapers	-.01	-.10	-.01	.08
Television	.09	-.09	.05	-.01
Magazines	.03	.01	-.13*	-.08
Radio	-.10	.07	-.09	-.06
Concern for Murder	-.04	-.03	-.03	-.03
Concern for Assault	.34**	.40***	.33**	.33**
Concern for Robbery	.15	-.19	-.19	-.19
Concern for Burglary	-.03	-.01	.01	.02
Concern for Rape	-.12	-.16	-.12	-.11
Gender	.03	.02	.04	.04
Race	-.03	-.05	-.05	-.02
Age	.08	.09	.06	.07
Income	.18*	.17**	.18**	.18**
R Square	.08	.09	.09	.08
Adjusted R Square	.03	.05	.05	.03
Sig. of Change	.065	.020	.01	.065

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

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1. Elaine Shannon, "Crime: Safer Streets, Yet Greater Fear," *Time*, 30 January 1995, 63-64.

2. Wesley G. Skogan and Michael G. Maxfield, *Coping with Crime: Individual and Neighborhood Reactions* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1981), 128; President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967).

3. Skogan and Maxfield, *Coping With Crime*, 140-142.

4. Joseph R. Dominick, "Crime and Law Enforcement in Prime-time Television," *Public Opinion Quarterly 37*(Summer 1973): 241-250; James Garofalo, "Crime and the Mass Media: A Selective Review of Research," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 18* (July 1981): 319-350; Doris A. Graber, *Crime News and the Public* (New York: Praeger, 1980), 26; Bob Roshier, "The Selection of Crime News by the Press," in *The Manufacture of News* , eds. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1973), 28-39; Sanford Sherizen, "Social Creation of Crime News: All the News Fitted to Print," in *Deviance and Mass Media*, ed. Charles Winick (Beverly Hills, Sage, 1978).

5. Steven M. Chermak, *Victims in the News: Crime and the American News Media* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995), 47; Steven Chermak, "Crime in the News: A Refined Understanding of how Crimes Become News," in *Media, Process, and the Social Construction of Crime: Studies in Newsmaking Criminology*, ed. Gregg Barak (New York: Garland Publishing, 1994), 95-129.

6. Graber, *Crime News and the Public,* 49-50
However, while Skogan and Maxfield (*Coping with Crime,* 260) found that the media were an important source of information about crime, they discovered that people were more likely to list friends and neighbors as their primary source

7. E.Terrence Jones, "The Press as Metropolitan Monitor," *Public Opinion Quarterly 40* (Summer 1976): 239-244.

8. John W.C. Johnstone, Darnell F. Hawkins and Arthur Michener, "Homicide Reporting in Chicago Dailies," *Journalism Quarterly 71* (Winter 1994): 860-872; John W. Windhauser, Jennifer Seiter, and L. Thomas Winfree, "Crime News in the Louisiana Press, 1980 vs. 1985," *Journalism Quarterly 67* (Spring 1990): 72-78; Fred Fedler and Deane Jordan, "How Emphasis on People Affects Coverage of Crime," *Journalism Quarterly 59* (Autumn 1982): 474-478; George E. Antunes and Patricia A. Hurley, "The Representation of Criminal Events in Houston's Two Daily Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly 54* (Winter 1977): 756-760; Shari Cohen, "A Comparison of Crime Coverage in Detroit and Atlanta Newspapers," *Journalism Quarterly 52* (Winter 1975): 726-730; David E. Payne and Kaye Price Payne, "Newspapers and Crime in Detroit," *Journalism Quarterly 47* (Summer 1970): 233-238. 308; Steve Chibnall, *Law-and-Order News: An Analysis of Crime Reporting in the British Press* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1977), 206. Gregg Barak, "Media, Society and Criminology," in Barak, *Media, Process, and the Social Construction of Crime*, 3-45; Richard V. Ericson, Patricia M. Baranek and Janet B. Chan, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991); F. James Davis, "Crime News in

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Colorado Newspapers, *The American Journal of Sociology 62* (January 1952): 325-330; Mark Fishman, "Crime Waves as Ideology," in Ray Surette, ed. *Justice and the Media: Issues and Research* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1984), 159-180; Robert A. Jerin and Charles B. Fields, "Murder and Mayhem in *USA Today:* A Quantitative Analysis of the National Reporting of States' News," in Barak, *Media, Process and the Social Construction of Crime,* 187-202; Harry L. Marsh, "A Comparative Analysis of Crime Coverage in Newspapers in the United States and Other Countries From 1960-1989: A Review of the Literature," *Journal of Criminal Justice 19* (1991), 67-79.

9. Graber, *Crime and the Public*, 41.

10. Antunes and Hurley, "The Representation of Criminal Events."

11. For instance, see Vincent F. Sacco, "Media Construction of Crime," in Wesley G. Skogan, *Reactions to Crime, The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 542* (November 1995): 141-154; Barak, "Media, Society, and Criminology" ; Chermak, "Crime in the News;" Ericson, Baranek and Chan, *Representing Order*, Roshier, "The Selection of Crime News;" Sherizen, "Social Creation of Crime News."

12. Davis, "Crime News in Colorado" .

13. Walter B. Jaehnig, David H. Weaver and Frederick Fico, "Reporting Crime and Fearing Crime in Three Communities," *Journal of Communication 31* (Winter 1981): 88-96; Joseph F. Sheley and Cindy D. Ashkins, "Crime, Crime News, and Crime Views," *Public Opinion Quarterly 45* (Winter 1981): 492-506; Joseph F. Sheley and Cindy D. Ashkins, "Crime, Crime News and Crime Views," In Surette, *Justice and the Media*, 124-140.

14. Roshier, "The Selection of Crime News".

15. P. Croll, "The Deviant Image" (paper presented at the British Sociological Association Mass Communications Study Group, 1974). Quoted in Guy Cumberbatch and Alan Beardsworth, "Criminals, Victims and Mass Communications," in *Victims and Society* , ed. Emilio C. Viano (Washington, D.C.: Visage Press, 1976).

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27. McLeod and McDonald, "Beyond Simple Exposure."

28. Terry L. Baumer, "Research on Fear of Crime in the United States," *Victimology: An International Journal, 3* (1978):254-264.

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32. *Uniform Crime Reports: Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics-1993.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1993).

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34. Roshier, "The Selection of Crime News;" Croll, "The Deviant Image."

35. Tyler, "Impact of Directly and Indirectly Experienced Events;" Perse, Ferguson and McLeod, "Cultivation in the Newer Media Environment;" Doob and MacDonald, "Television Viewing and Fear of Victimization."

36. Skogan and Maxfield, *Coping with Crime,* 143-144.

37. Tyler, "Impact of Directly and Indirectly Experienced Events;" Skogan and Maxfield, *Coping with Crime*, 259-260.

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39. Chaffee, Zhao and Leshner, "Political Knowledge and the Campaign Media of 1992;" Drew and Weaver, "Media Attention, Media Exposure, and Media Effects;" Weaver and Buddenbaum, "Newspaper and Television;" Clarke and Fredin, " Newspapers, Television and Political Reasoning."

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42. W. James Potter, "Adolescents' Perceptions of the Primary Values of Television Programming," *Journalism Quarterly 65* (1990): 843-851; W. James Potter and Ik Chin Chang, "Television Exposure Measures and the Cultivation Hypothesis," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media 34* (Summer 1990): 313-333; Chaffee and Schleuder, "Measurements of Effects of Attention."

43. Chaffee and Schleuder, "Measurements of Effects of Attention;" Martinelli and Chaffee, " Measuring New-Voter Learning."

44. Fishman, for instance, found that New York's major media created the perception that there was a surge of violence against the elderly in 1976 by linking together several incidents of violence of the elderly even though statistics showed homicides against the elderly had actually dropped 19 percent from the previous year (Mark Fishman, "Crime Waves as Ideology, *Social Problems 29* (June 1978): 531-543).

On the N- and F-Words: Quantifying the Taboo

Paul Martin Lester
Associate Professor
Department of Communications
California State University, Fullerton
OFFICE: 714.449.5302; MAIN OFFICE: 714.773.3517;
FAX: 714.773.2209; E-MAIL: lester@fullerton.edu "les";
WORLD WIDE WEB: http://www5.fullerton.edu/les/homeboy.html

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ABSTRACT

The terms *nigger*, *fuck*, *n-word*, and *f-word* were found in 13 news organizations for three time periods. Findings indicate increases in the use of *nigger*, *n-word*, and *f-word*. It is concluded that while *fuck* is effectively banned as a taboo word, *nigger*, arguably a more offensive word, is gaining in its mass media use. However, use of the word *nigger*, if it inspires discussions on systemic social racism and discrimination, can be defended and justified.

NOTE: This study is available on the World Wide Web at: http://www5.fullerton.edu/les/taboo.html

In this modern, democratic, and free-speech loving society called America there are few words that are so controversial that they are taboo within most social situations—*nigger* and *fuck*, however, are two of them.

Conservative opinion leader Robert Novak was the substitute host for Larry King's interview program on CNN with guest Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina when a caller from Alabama heated up the discussion:

> CALLER: I know this might not be politically correct to say these days, but I just think that you should get a Nobel Peace Prize for everything you've done to help keep down the niggers.
>
> NOVAK: Oh, dear.
>
> HELMS: Whoops. Well...
>
> NOVAK: Ha, ha, ha.
>
> HELMS: Ha, ha, ha.
>
> NOVAK: That was the bad word. That was politically incorrect. Can you—we really don't condone that kind of language, do we?
>
> HELMS: No, no, no.
>
> NOVAK: Absolutely.
>
> HELMS: No. My father didn't condone it. When I was a little boy, one of the worst spankings I ever got is when I used that word, and I don't think I've used it ever since.
>
> NOVAK: And you had—
>
> HELMS: Mark Twain used it.
>
> NOVAK: And you had—you had—you had African Americans on your staff a long time ago, didn't you?
>
> HELMS: Oh, yes. I hired several.[1]

It wasn't long ago when the word *fuck* was equally despised and shielded from public hearing. Dictionaries, if they even included the word, would often use "f**k" to indicate its presence—it was too shocking to even write the entire word on paper.[2] But over time and through drastically increased use, particularly in entertainment settings, *fuck* has lost much of its power to shock. George Carlin's seven dirty words that couldn't be said on television in 1973 helped that process along.[3] Since then, countless movies, comedians in clubs and on cable, and lyricists in their songs use the word to shock and to simulate meaningful and well-written dialogue. And although children are still protected from the word both visually and audibly, there is no doubt that the society's use of the word has diminished its power—the taboo has been greatly lifted.

Fuck even has an entire book devoted to its history and use. *The F Word* has 224 pages of its variations, from *absofuckinglutely* to *titfuck*. In the foreword, Roy Blount, Jr. writes that the word *fuck* is "our worst word, at least of one syllable, and maybe our strongest." He then tells the story of when Norman Mailer in his novel, *The Naked and the Dead*, substituted *fug* for it. This

> led Dorothy Parker to tell the young novelist when she met him at a party, "So you're the man who can't spell *fuck*."[4]

But there is no book titled, *The N Word*. That's because *fuck* can be used as a noun, expletive, and verb and is not specific to any one cultural group. *Nigger* almost exclusively indicates a racist attack against African Americans.[5] In Jesse Sheidlower's introduction to *The F Word* he writes that "one prominent professor told *U.S. News & World Report* in 1994 that if she used *fuck* in class, no one would bat an eye, but she would never dare to use any racial epithet in any context.[4] However, confounding a discussion on the use of the word is the fact that *nigger* and its more acceptable cultural counterpart, *nigga*, can be used without offending listeners if used within the

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proper social context. For example, before Janet Cooke lost her Pulitzer after it was learned that her *Washington Post* series was ficticious, she justified embellishing her résumé to get the *Post* position in an interview fifteen years later for *GQ* magazine with, "My goal was to create Supernigger." Moreover, saying the word in a comedy club can cause audience members to grab their sides in fits of laughter.[7]

But there was nothing funny about the way the word was used during the past year.

It was called the trial of the decade, the century, and possibly of all time—the O.J. Simpson double-murder trial, of course. A young, beautiful woman and a strong, vibrant man were viciously cut out of the rest of their lives. The suspect was none other than one of the most well-liked and admired sports heroes in the history of football. The case inspired tough analysis of how the legal system convenes juries, the way lawyers and judges act during a trial, the way evidence is presented, and the way the news media cover, present, and comment on trial proceedings. The case's conclusion also inspired analysis into the ways different races are treated within this country and how people from different cultural backgrounds can have such differing reactions to the verdict.

But there was no analysis on the media's reporting of one of the most controversial and disturbing words in the English language that repeatedly was used during the trial. When it was learned that former LAPD police detective Mark Fuhrman used the word *nigger* to describe African Americans (an accusation he had repeatedly denied), the word was often reported within the pages of newspapers and magazines and broadcast on television and through the radio. Suddenly, and with little warning, one of the most taboo words in our society was openly heard on a regular basis.

Actions, persons, objects, and words have been tabooed by various cultural groups throughout history. In *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul* by the anthropologist James Frazer, chapters describe such taboos connected with talking to strangers, handling the dead, reserving foods to sacred persons such as kings and priests, and the naming of dangerous animals. A person could be put to death, for example, for saying the name of a king.[8] Although the word taboo comes from Polynesian origin, the concept of taboo is probably "the oldest human unwritten code of laws."[9] In commenting on the lateness of any recorded history of the word *fuck*, for example, Sheidlower writes that "the word carried a taboo so strong that it was never written down in the Middle Ages."[10]

Sigmund Freud suggests that taboo restrictions "are distinct from religious or moral prohibitions" because they date to a period before religion existed.[11] Consequently, taboos call to mind the archetypal and unspoken fears of all people while identifying the prohibited and disturbing. Frazer cites the connection between taboos and people by studying early humans and their inability to differentiate words and objects:

> ...the savage generally imagines that the link between a name and the nominated object or subject is not a mere arbitrary and ideological association but a true and substantial bond ....[12]

To utter a taboo word, then, is to immediately link the word with a person or action. In semiotic terms, a symbolic sign becomes iconic.[13] The difference between *nigger* and *fuck* is that the word *nigger* is almost always meant to be a derogatory and demeaning description directed at African Americans while the word *fuck* is never associated with a single cultural group. Without evoking much argument, then, it can be stated that two of the most arresting and noticeable words in the English language are *nigger* and *fuck*.[14] Regardless of the social situation—from a private conversation to a televised comedy performance—and regardless of intent—from an academic discussion of their use to an expression of bitter racial hatred—taboo words often evoke deep, primal emotions. These taboo words draw their power and symbolic meaning largely from the fact that they are not supposed to be said.

During the O.J. Simpson double-murder trial, Los Angeles Deputy Dist. Atty. Christopher A. Darden called *nigger* the "dirtiest, filthiest, nastiest word in the English language."[15] The word became an issue in July, 1994, when it was learned that Mark Fuhrman, a star witness for the prosecution, made derogatory racial statements in a private personnel document. Fuhrman was key to the trial because he was one of the first officers at Simpson's Brentwood estate and found an important piece of evidence, a bloody glove that matched the one found at the scene of the murders. Soon afterward, witnesses who had met Fuhrman on social occasions remarked of his racially volatile comments. When Fuhrman took the stand in March, 1995, Simpson's defense team was ready for him. However, Fuhrman was direct in his denial under oath of ever using the word in the last ten years. Five months later, however, tape recordings of Fuhrman talking to an aspiring screenwriter were made public. Johnnie Cochran, head of Simpson's defense team, asserted that Fuhrman used the "'n-word' more than 42 times." Suddenly, the gloves were off when it came to this taboo word and all manner of media ran stories about the use of the word by Fuhrman. The outcome of the trial, as it turned out, hinged on Fuhrman's confusing testimony and the perceived racism within the LAPD, the justice system, and American society generally.[16]

During the Simpson trial the media seemed to be more willing to use the word *nigger* than its *n-word* counterpart when it regularly used the *f-word* phrase to replace the word *fuck*. If it can be agreed upon that the word *nigger* is more offensive to read and hear than the word *fuck*, why was *nigger* used so often? Is the Simpson trial and the use of the word *nigger* by the trial participants and by those in the media simply foretelling a time when the word *nigger* will have the same diluted power as the word *fuck*?

Based on the previous discussion and observations of the media, this research attempts to address four hypotheses about the use of the words *nigger* and *fuck* and the phrases *n-word* and *f-word* by the U.S. media:

> H1: All media represented in this study will use the word *nigger* more than the word *fuck*.
>
> H2: All media represented in this study will use the *n-word* phrase more than the *f-word* phrase.
>
> H3: Use of all the keywords analyzed in this study will increase from 1985 figures.
>
> H4: Print publications will use the words *nigger* and *fuck* more often than broadcast entities.

METHOD

The Lexis/Nexis database versions of seven newspapers—*Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, New Orleans Times-Picayune, The New York Times, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, USA Today*, and *The Washington Post*—two magazines—*Newsweek* and *Time*—and four broadcasting news services—ABC News, CNN, the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," and National Public Radio (NPR)—were examined for any story that used the words *fuck* and *nigger* and the *f-word* and *n-word* phrases for the years 1985, 1994, and 1995. The three time periods were employed to provide base level, pre, and post trial figures. The individual story was the unit of analysis, and a single mention of any of the keywords in a full text search was enough to prompt inclusion of that story in the data set. Variations of the words,[17] more relevant for *fuck*, were also included in the story count. As much as it was possible, multiple stories were culled from the count.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The 13 media institutions used in this study resulted in 2,419 stories that contained at least one of the search terms. When the search terms Simpson and Fuhrman are removed from the database searches in order to effectively delete all references to the double-murder trial, the total number of stories is 1,109. Regardless of whether the stories contain references to Simpson or Fuhrman or not, two of the four hypotheses are supported (See Tables 1-4):

H1: All media represented in this study will use the word nigger *more than the word* fuck.

Support for the hypothesis. Table 1 shows that the word *nigger* was used in 1,539 stories by all media represented in this study while the word *fuck* was only used eleven times when the Simpson trial references were included. On the print side, *The New York Times* had the largest difference in the use of the two words than any other print organization with *nigger* used in 256 stories and *fuck* in none of its stories. On the broadcast side, CNN had the largest difference in use of the two words than other broadcasters with 297 stories with the word *nigger* and seven using the word *fuck*. Table 2 indicates that when the Simpson trial was excluded from analysis, the word *nigger* was found in 742 stories and the word *fuck* three times overall. *The New York Times* and CNN again top the greatest difference between the use of the two words by any other print or broadcast companies in this study.

H2: All media represented in this study will use the n-word *phrase more than the* f-word *phrase.*

Support for the hypothesis. Table 1 indicates that the *n-word* phrase was used a total of 583 times while the *f-word* phrase was employed a total of 286 times. However, there are some media differences to note related to the Simpson double-murder trial. The print publication figures for the two phrases indicate an almost equal split between the use of the two terms while the broadcast media are overwhelming more willing to use the *n-word* phrase rather than the *f-word* phrase. However, when the Simpson double-murder case is factored out of the analysis (Table 2), all the media dramatically favor the *f-word* over the *n-word* phrase. The high *n-word* figure for the broadcast media largely comes from CNN which sponsored regular analysis of the trial by a great variety of court interpreters. These guests, when discussing matters related to the use of the word nigger during the trial, used the *n-word* phrase to avoid its controversial effect as a taboo word.

H3: Use of all the keywords analyzed in this study will increase from 1985 figures.

Mixed results for the hypothesis. Although it was assumed that the word *fuck* would gain in numbers due to its widespread use in other media, Table 3 shows that the use of the word dropped from two to only one story for the seven media organizations in which 1985 data was available. This finding indicates an almost total ban on its use. The print ban is a bit surprising given the First Amendment guarantees afforded the print media while broadcasters must be sensitive to community standards given the 1934 Federal Communications Act authorizing broadcasters to "serve the public interest." However, all the other terms used in this study show dramatic increases in their use and a similar pattern for all seven media entities. Most notably, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* increased the number of stories with the word nigger from 32 and 38, respectively in 1985 to 90 and 66, respectively for 1995. The table also indicates that the *n-word* and *f-word* phrases are relatively new as substitutes for the taboo words. The *n-word* phrase was never used in 1985 while the *f-word* phrase was used eight times split among the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Time* magazine.

H4: Print publications will use the words nigger and fuck more often than broadcast entities.

Mixed results for the hypothesis. As Table 1 shows, CNN and NPR used the word *fuck* eight times in newscasts compared with the print media that combined for a total of three times. Only the *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times* made use of the word. Such a finding again indicates an almost agreed upon ban of the word by journalists. When Simpson and Fuhrman references are removed (Table 2), the total drops to three—one each from CNN, NPR, and the *Los Angeles Times*. However, print publications, by a two-times margin, more often used the word nigger than the broadcasting media. Print publications used the word *nigger* 1,054 times while the broadcast news services used the term 485 times. Most of the broadcast total comes from CNN which used the word 297 times.

Unlike the other broadcast media in this study, CNN broadcast the entire trial which accounts for the high number of search term hits compared with the other media. However, when the Simpson trial is removed from the analysis, the word *fuck* is used only once by the *Los Angeles Times*—compared to twice, once each by CNN and NPR—while the word *nigger* is used 605 times by the print media compared with 137 times by the broadcast media.

Table 4 takes a look at the percentages of stories that contain the four search terms with the findings divided into print and broadcast media. When all references to the Simpson trial are removed from analysis (the figures in parentheses), the print media generally increased their use of all four terms, with the greatest rise in the word *nigger* and the *n-word* phrase. The broadcast media, however, decreased the use of all four terms, with marked shifts in the word *nigger* and the *n-word* phrase. The findings in Table 4 strongly suggest that it is more acceptable to print the word *nigger* than *fuck*, with the print media more willing to do so than the broadcast media.

CONCLUSIONS

The impact of the O.J. Simpson double-murder trial on journalism and society cannot be denied with regards to the findings in this study. Because of the trial, the word *nigger* was used in transcripts, stories, and trial analyses in print and broadcast media a total of 1,539 times. And yet, if the trial had never occurred, the total drops to 742, a substantial increase over the 1985 figure of 150. The word *fuck*, however, prospered little from the trial of the century—it is almost never used within news-editorial stories, anyway. One is left with the question that if the words *nigger* and *fuck* are two of the worst words the English language has to offer, with *nigger* arguably topping this short list, why are the news media overwhelmingly willing to use *nigger* over *fuck*?

Given recent studies and publications indicating that stories and pictures of African Americans in the media will almost always be within the stereotypical content categories of sports, entertainment, and crime, and given the low percentage of African Americans as reporters, editors and in higher management positions in media organizations, one may be tempted to blame, at best cultural insensitivity, and at worst racism, as the reason for the use of the word nigger.[18] But such overt racism—including the word *nigger* in stories simply to upset readers—would never be tolerated by professional organizations and would not explain the systemic use of the word throughout all the media studied.

The media are not composed of reporters, photographers, and editors who are isolated and aloof. Journalists are members of the communities which they serve. If the media stereotype and if taboo words are used more often than in previous years, it is because society stereotypes and tolerates a relaxation of taboo words.

Much of the reason for the increased use of *nigger* comes from the journalistic practice of objectivity and the concept of community standards. The professional practice of objectivity, when applied to reporting, writing, and editing, demands that a journalist use direct quotes from sources that are accurate and complete. With more people using the word *nigger*, there will be more stories that include it. There is no quicker method a journalist can do to discount the opinions of an under-educated racist than by quoting the person accurately and without using the softening *n-word* phrase that reduces the impact of the socially taboo word.

Furthermore, sensitivity to community (and personal) standards by journalists prevents many editors from using the words for paraphrased, descriptive, or analytical passages. The *n-word* phrase is then employed when the voice of the reporter—either in print or broadcast—is intended rather than the direct voice of a source.

Although vile and repulsive, taboo words, because of their immediate impact, rivet our attention to important social situations as sure as any dramatic, spot news photograph. In fact, it can be argued that the word nigger is a much more valuable tool toward societal illumination than the word *fuck*, at least for the stories found in this study. When stories contain the word fuck or the phrase the *f-word*, there is almost never an examination of the word's larger societal implications. The focus of the story is on the person saying the word and not on the word itself and its societal impact. Stories in print and broadcast chastise such celebrities as Madonna, Sinead O'Connor, and Dr. Dre and movies such as *The Usual Suspects* and *Four Rooms* for using the word *fuck*, but there is little discussion of the word other than its role as an aid to shock audiences.

However, when *nigger* is a part of a story, more often than not, the word is within a larger context of racial intolerance by societal institutions such as the military, government, sports, entertainment, education, and politics. For example, in the stories found in this study the word provoked wider discussions of racism on army bases, within the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, among football referees, as a topic of rap songs, against an African American valedictorian, and as a part of right-wing politics. The word, then, starts a discussion not keyed so much on the one saying the word, but what the word means within our multicultural society.

But when the word *nigger* is altered to a more socially acceptable *n-word* phrase within a direct quotation so as not to offend—not African Americans but—the large majority of Anglo readers and viewers, the word's power to shock and then teach is lost. *Los Angeles Times* television critic Howard Rosenberg made this point when he reported that actor Marlon Brando blamed Jewish movie executives for the use of ethnic stereotypes in motion pictures. On CNN's "Larry King Live," Brando said, "We've seen the nigger, we've seen the greaseball, we've seen the chink, we've seen the slit-eyed dangerous Jap, we've seen the wily Filipino, we've seen everything, but we never saw the kike." In his column critical of local news station coverage, Rosenberg comments:

> However, in a bit of selective "political correctness"—a gratuitously overused term that happens to apply in this case—Channel 2 [the Los Angeles CBS affiliate] inexplicably bleeped "nigger" from the CNN footage, while letting the other ethnic slurs stand, as if they were somehow less repugnant.[19]

Within the broader educational mission of journalism, the word should not be automatically avoided and softened with its *n-word* counterpart. *Nigger* is no doubt one of the ugliest words one can use, and as such should be used with caution and after discussion in the newsroom. But if its use teaches all members of society to understand the bite of racism and acknowledge the work that needs to be accomplished to overcome systemic discrimination within societal institutions, its use may be defended and justified.

NOTES

[1] "Some of their best friends," *Time*, 25 September 1995, 24.

[2] See *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Co., 1967), William and Mary Morris (eds.), *Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), T.F. Hoad (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), and *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979). In all four works cited, the word *nigger* and its definition is included and the word *fuck* is not present.

[3] In a comedy record recording that became controversial when the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) sued Pacifica Broadcasting for airing the bit and won with a Supreme Court ruling in 1978, George Carlin accurately predicted the seven words one simply cannot say on television which were: shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, and tits. See "http://fileroom.aaup.uic.edu/FileRoom/documents/Cases/55georgeCarlin.html".

[4] Jesse Sheidlower (ed.), *The F Word*, (New York: Random House, 1995), ix.

[5] In Sheidlower's book, the definitions of *fuck* as a noun include "an act of copulation," "a despicable person," and "an evil turn of events;" as an expletive, as a substitute for *hell*; and as a verb, "to copulate with," "as a way to express dismay," "to harm irreparably," "to botch," and "to trifle, toy, meddle, or interfere," 90-115. In *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary*, 2nd ed., *nigger* is defined as, "a Negro," "a member of any dark-skinned people," and "a vulgar, offensive term of hostility and contempt, as used by Negrophobes," 1211.

[6] Sheidlower, *The F Word*, xxi. Also, it was communicated to the author through E-mail (May 22, 1996) that an assistant professor within a mass communication program in a medium-sized southern institution was possibly denied tenure because of the controversy he evoked as a result of a discussion of the word *nigger* during a class.

[7] See Mike Sager, "Janet's World," *GQ*, June 1996, 207 or tune into the HBO cable show, "Comedy Def Jam" for various examples of the words *fuck*, *nigger*, and *nigga*.

[8] James Frazer, *The Golden Bough Part II Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, (London: Macmillan and Co, 1938), x-xv.

[9] Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Volume XIII Totem and Taboo*, (London: The Hogarth Press, 1957), 18.

[10] Sheidlower, *The F Word*, xxv.

[11] Freud, *The Standard Edition*, 18.

[12] Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 318.

[13] See Paul Martin Lester, *Visual Communication Images with Messages*, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1995), 61-67.

[14] There are, of course, many other words that have taboo status in various languages. Most computer E-mail systems require a password from a user. Here is a list of words from several languages that cannot be used as passwords with the VMS password program from "http://morchella.ftp.com:80/stories/bad_words.txt": shit, fuk, fuck, assh, hell, cunt, bitch, tits, nigger, fuq, lul, pik, snikkel, kloot, zak, trut, hoer, slet, del, tut, neuk, naai, geil, kezen, stront, kut, trut, flikker, poot, pot, miet, homo, kont, gat, bil, reet, aars, kever, verdomme, balle, djevel, drite, dritt, faen, fan, fanden, fitte, forpult, helvete, jukke, knull, kuk, pikk, promp, pul, pult, rass, ronk, runk, svin, tispe, tiss, puta, putas, poya, poyas, polla, pollas, gilipoyas, gilipollas, capullo, capullos, copon, cagar, mear, pis, mierda, cipote, joder, follar, cagar, marica, pedo, caca, culo, teta, maricon, cojones, picha, mamon, cabron, hostia, and hostias. See also Saul Jerushalmy and Rens Zbignieux, *The PC Manifesto Socially Intolerable Words*, ("http://fiction.isdn.uiuc.edu:80/tidbits/pc.html", 1992). Their list includes such epithets as: Alky, Babe, Beaner, Belgian-Bastard, Betty, Bimbo, Bitch, Blonde, Broad, Bum, Canuck, Chick, Chink, Coolie, Coon, Commie, Crip, Dego, Dike, Dot-head, Druggie, Fag, Fairy, Four-Eyes, Fudgepacker, Greaser, Hebe, Hippie, Honky, Hooknose, Indian, Injun, Jap, JAP, Jesus-Freak, Kike, Kraut, Lez, Lush, Nazi, Nigger, Nudnick, Pinko, Polock, Raghead, Redneck, Redskin, Retard, Ruskie, Sambo, Skirt, Spic, Spook, Tart, Toots, Uncle Tom, Vegetable, Wetback, Whore, White-Trash, and Wop.

[15] Andrea Ford, "Black Leaders to Honor Darden as Role Model Despite Simpson Case," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 December 1995, A16.

[16] See the *Los Angeles Times* and about any other publication on the planet from June, 1994 until October, 1995.

[17] Such variations might include *fucker*, *fucking*, *fucked*, and *motherfucker*.

[18] See Paul Martin Lester (ed.), *Images that Injure Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996), Paul Martin Lester, "African-American Photo Coverage in Four U.S. Newspapers, 1937-1990," *Journalism Quarterly* 71/2 (Summer 1994): 380-394, Carolyn Martindale, *The White Press and Black America*, (NY: Greenwood Press, 1986), and Alice Sentman, "Black and White: Disparity in Coverage by *Life* Magazine from 1937 to 1972," *Journalism Quarterly* 60 (Autumn 1983): 501-508.

[19] Howard Rosenberg, "Brand-New Lineup, Same Brand of News," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 April 1996, F1, F7, F11.

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TABLE 1: Stories that contain the search terms *fuck*, *f-word*, *nigger*, or *n-word* for 1985, 1994, and 1995 with *simpson* and *fuhrman* references included

	'85	'94	'95	total
abc news				
f*	na^	0	0	0
fw		2	2	4
n		23	86	109
nw		0	29	29
				142
chicago tribune				
f	2	0	0	2
fw	4	14	28	46
n	31	42	49	122
nw	0	5	25	30
				200
cnn				
f	na	0	7	7
fw		8	8	16
n		53	244	297
nw		1	287	288
				608
la times				
f	0	1	0	1
fw	3	33	30	66
n	33	57	93	183
nw	0	12	74	86
				336
macneil/lehrer				
f	0	0	0	0
fw	0	0	0	0
n	4	7	7	18
nw	0	1	0	1
				19
new orleans times-picayune				
f	na	0	0	0
fw		8	8	16
n		39	25	64
nw		3	15	18
				98
npr				
f	na	1	0	1
fw		1	5	6
n		20	41	61
nw		2	19	21
				89

	'85	'94	'95	total
newsweek				
f	0	0	0	0
fw	0	3	2	5
n	7	8	20	35
nw	0	1	10	11
				51
new york times				
f	0	0	0	0
fw	0	7	7	14
n	32	76	148	256
nw	0	1	12	13
				283
st. louis post-dispatch				
f	na	0	0	0
fw		17	15	32
n		18	32	50
nw		5	16	21
				103
time				
f	0	0	0	0
fw	1	5	5	11
n	5	9	29	43
nw	0	0	4	4
				58
usa today				
f	na	0	0	0
fw		20	14	34
n		22	49	71
nw		1	19	20
				125
washington post				
f	0	0	0	0
fw	0	16	20	36
n	38	79	113	230
nw	0	9	32	41
				307
all				
f	2	2	7	11
fw	8	134	144	286
n	150	453	936	1,539
nw	0	41	542	583
				2,419

*f=*fuck*; fw=*f-word*; n=*nigger*; nw=*n-word*
^=not available

TABLE 2: Stories that contain the search terms *fuck*, *f-word*, *nigger*, or *n-word* for 1994 and 1995 with *simpson* and *fuhrman* references removed

	'94	'95	total		'94	'95	total
abc news				*newsweek*			
f*	0	0	0	f	0	0	0
fw	2	1	3	fw	3	2	5
n	17	8	25	n	7	8	15
nw	0	0	0	nw	1	2	3
			28				23
chicago tribune				*new york times*			
f	0	0	0	f	0	0	0
fw	14	27	41	fw	7	7	7
n	40	26	66	n	74	90	164
nw	5	9	14	nw	1	4	5
			121				183
cnn				*st. louis post-dispatch*			
f	0	1	1	f	0	0	0
fw	7	4	11	fw	17	15	32
n	48	18	66	n	18	8	26
nw	1	1	2	nw	5	5	10
			80				68
la times				*time*			
f	1	0	1	f	0	0	0
fw	33	24	57	fw	5	5	10
n	53	33	86	n	8	11	19
nw	11	14	25	nw	0	1	1
			169				30
macneil/lehrer				*usa today*			
f	0	0	0	f	0	0	0
fw	0	0	0	fw	20	13	33
n	6	1	7	n	20	12	32
nw	1	0	1	nw	1	4	5
			8				70
new orleans times-picayune				*washington post*			
f	0	0	0	f	0	0	0
fw	8	8	16	fw	16	18	34
n	38	17	55	n	76	66	142
nw	3	5	8	nw	9	14	23
			79				199
npr				*all*			
f	1	0	1	f	2	1	3
fw	1	5	6	fw	133	129	262
n	20	19	39	n	425	317	742
nw	2	3	5	nw	40	62	102
			51				1,109

*f=*fuck*; fw=*f-word*; n=*nigger*; nw=*n-word*

TABLE 3: Stories that contain the search terms *fuck*, *f-word*, *nigger*, or *n-word* for 1985 and 1995 with *simpson* and *fuhrman* references removed

	1985	1995		1985	1995
chicago tribune			*new york times*		
f*	2	0	f	0	0
fw	4	27	fw	0	7
n	31	26	n	32	90
nw	0	9	nw	0	4
la times			*time*		
f	0	0	f	0	0
fw	3	24	fw	1	5
n	33	33	n	5	11
nw	0	14	nw	0	1
macneil/lehrer			*washington post*		
f	0	0	f	0	0
fw	0	0	fw	0	18
n	4	1	n	38	66
nw	0	0	nw	0	14
newsweek			*all*		
f	0	0	f	2	1
fw	0	2	fw	8	83
n	7	8	n	150	235
nw	0	2	nw	0	44

*f=*fuck*; fw=*f-word*; n=*nigger*; nw=*n-word*

TABLE 4: Percentages of stories that contain the search terms *fuck*, *f-word*, *nigger*, or *n-word* by media type

	newspapers		magazines		all print		broadcast	
f*	27.3^	(33.3)~	0.0	(0.0)	27.3	(33.3)	72.7	(66.7)
fw	85.3	(86.6)	5.6	(5.7)	90.9	(92.3)	9.1	(7.6)
n	63.4	(77.0)	5.1	(4.6)	68.5	(81.6)	31.5	(18.5)
nw	39.3	(88.2)	2.6	(3.9)	41.9	(92.1)	58.1	(7.8)

*f=*fuck*; fw=*f-word*; n=*nigger*; nw=*n-word*
^=percentages may or may not add to 100 due to rounding
~=with *simpson* and *fuhrman* references removed

Building The Terrorism Agenda, 1981-1994:
The Media, the President and Real World Cues

Dr. Patrick M. Jablonski
The University of Central Florida
School of Communication
P.O. Box 161344
Orlando, Florida 32816-1344
(407) 823-9613 (Home)
(407) 823-2840 (Office)
E-mail: pjablons@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu

Dr. Christopher Sullivan
Sullivan & Garcia Research
912 Shadowlawn Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32312
E-mail: sullivan@mailer.fsu.edu

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Running head: Building the Terrorism Agenda, 1981-1994

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between the president and the mass media regarding the issue of terrorism from 1981-1994. Prior research indicates that media coverage follows or mirrors both presidential emphasis and levels of terrorism, while terrorism has a symbiotic relationship with the media. Presidential emphasis of an issue, however, is affected by many political factors. Both the agenda-building and symbiotic relationship hypotheses would predict strong agenda relationships between the press and the president and between the press and the incidence of terrorism. Time series analysis indicates that levels of mass media terrorism coverage and presidential emphasis of terrorism are significantly correlated. In addition, no significant relationship was detected between levels of terrorism and the agendas of the president or the mass media.

Building the Terrorism Agenda, 1981-1994:

The Media, the President, and Real World Cues

Terrorism has been defined "as a process of deliberate employment of psychological intimidation and physical violence by sovereign states and subnational groups to attain strategic and political objectives in violation of law" (Alexander, 1992, p. ix). In terms of both media coverage and actual acts, terrorism increased in prominence during President Ronald Reagan's first term. During Reagan's second term, however, terrorism lost much of its mass media exposure. The popular perception on the part of policy-makers and scholars at the time was that terrorism was decreasing[1]. However, terrorism's fall from prominence belies the fact that terrorism was still occurring at record levels.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the media agenda, real-world cues, and the presidential public relations agenda regarding terrorism between 1981 and 1994. Specifically, this study seeks to determine if amounts of terrorism coverage in the media correlate more closely with the actual statistical levels of terrorism or with presidential emphasis of terrorism.

Terrorism and the Media

Studies about terrorism and the mass media are certainly not new. The majority of analyses of terrorism and press coverage review certain specific aspects of the phenomenon, such as what groups, regions, or incidents are most likely to be covered. Crelinsten's (1989) examination of terrorism in the print media argues that excessive attention is placed on international terrorism. Other scholars posit that the mass media overemphasize certain regions, such as the Middle East (Kelly & Mitchell 1981; Delli Carpini & Williams 1984, 1987) or certain tactics, such as hijacking (Jenkins, 1981). Largely absent from mass media coverage is domestic and state terrorism, terrorism in regions other than the Middle East and Europe, and many bombings (Jenkins, 1981).

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[1] Hearings on anti-terrorism initiatives during the waning years of Reagan's presidency include statements from policy-makers and scholars indicating the opinion that since terrorism is not as prominent in the media, terrorism must be decreasing. A good example of this comes from Jenkins (1986).

Media coverage of terrorism, however, has rarely been studied from an agenda-building perspective (Schaffert, 1992). Despite the comparative lack of quantitative data on the relationship between terrorism and the mass media, a number of scholars have advanced several popular theories. The predominant conclusion drawn by most researchers has been that the relationship between terrorism and the mass media is a symbiotic one (Long, 1990). In other words, terrorists supply the media with interesting material for stories, while the media provide coverage to the terrorists. The symbiotic relationship theory depends on two primary assumptions: first, that terrorists act in order to achieve press coverage; and second, that the media, in need of prominent stories, will cover terrorist acts.

There is evidence that terrorists desire coverage. "Some terrorists clearly consider the potential impact of media coverage when planning some operations, and they carry out actions designed to manipulate coverage by creating incidents that will receive coverage because of social norms and common media industry practices" (Picard, 1992, p. 5). Smith (1990) claims that publicity is the prime motivation of terrorists. In this view, terrorists generally do not act unless they can be assured of press coverage (Segaller, 1986). Publicity is important to terrorists because mass media exposure can call attention to the group's cause (Evans, 1979). Other theorists contend that publicity helps a terrorist group gain credibility. Certainly, a group which gains mass media coverage will be better known and perhaps more feared than a group not covered by the media (Clutterbuck, 1987). Indeed, Schaffert (1992) discovered the existence of a positive relationship between the amount of mass media coverage of a specific event and concessions made by target governments to terrorist demands. Coverage enables terrorists to be regarded as an important force in society. Lending further support to this position are findings which indicate that the actual targets of terrorism are not the immediate victims of an attack. Instead, the media audience may be the actual target (Morris & Hoe, 1987; Hanle, 1989).

Terrorism can be important for the mass media as well. Terrorist acts are newsworthy and more interesting to the general public than most other events (Long, 1990). Schlagheck (1988) argues that competition in the modern era of television has caused networks to literally embrace terrorism. Gatekeepers may also feel that they are performing a public service by covering terrorism (Martin & Draznin, 1992). Terrorist events are more likely to be regarded as news because of the interest they generate with readers, viewers, and listeners (Atkins, 1992). It is this high probability of interest in a terrorist act that has led various writers and scholars to conclude that a symbiotic relationship exists between the mass media and terrorism (Farnen, 1989). Long (1990) notes that a symbiotic relationship implies a degree of need on the part of the media for terrorist acts or other forms of violence.

The Media and the President

The assumption that terrorist activity automatically becomes news is problematic, however. This assumption is based on the premise that there are few, if any, outside factors determining whether terrorist events become media events. In other words, the media are affected by other events and issues, governmental policy emphasis, and economic factors. Agenda-building studies, moreover, indicate that media coverage is often a determinant of what issues policy elites deem important (Protess & McCombs, 1991). Linsky (1986) argues that media influence of the policy agenda may be strong.

Furthermore, a bi-directional relationship may exist between the agendas of the media and the president (Denton & Hahn, 1986). Put simply, the media can influence the presidential agenda while the president can influence the media agenda. The mass media relate to the president in three major ways. The first characteristic of that relationship is that the media serve as an intermediary between the president and the public. Obviously, a major factor in the relationship between the president and the public is the communication-related role of the media. The media provide the president with exposure to the public and vice versa (Graber, 1982; Edwards & Wayne, 1985). In addition, the press follows every move a president makes, adding to the considerable amount of news coverage devoted to the White House (Orman, 1990). This also enlarges the typical audience for any one presidential message (Denton & Hahn, 1986). Furthermore, Light (1991) claims that a president may transmit a list of priorities to the public and Congress at the start of an administration through the mass media. This is an important function, especially if one feels that the role of the president is to shape national attitudes into a coherent policy (Powell, 1986).

The second main characteristic of the press-president relationship is that the president, as the chief political figure in America, provides news stories. The president may therefore play a major role in agenda-building (Gilberg et al., 1980; Lang & Lang, 1981; Weaver & Elliott, 1985; Turk, 1986; Robinson, 1990). Behr and Iyengar (1985) note that the president is the key American political figure and receives the plurality of media and public attention. Levels of press coverage are very often affected by the president's explicated agenda. Presidents can create news by holding press conferences and photo opportunities, among other ceremonies (Ansolabehere, Behr, & Iyengar, 1993). Presidents use pseudo-events and other communication opportunities to infuse the news with "self-serving commercials" (Denton & Hahn, 1986, p. 275). Indeed, Behr and Iyengar (1985) found that a single presidential speech on a given issue can result in as many as ten stories. These researchers note that when President Reagan addressed the economy, lead stories about the economy increased in the media.

A third relationship may also be at work. Prior research reflects an interest in the effects of the mass media on the policy agenda. Cobb and Elder (1972) posit that the mass media play a huge role in elevating issues to the presidential agenda. Therefore, the mass media may directly affect the presidential agenda. Lang and Lang's (1983) classic study of the Watergate affair concluded that the media emphasized the issue for months before the scandal became part of the public policy agenda. Rogers and Dearing (1988, p. 577) note that "The media's influence upon policymakers might be expected to be greater for quick-onset issues when the media have priority access to information; alternatively, when policy elites control the information sources, they might be expected to set the media agenda." Similarly, Weaver's (1990) attempt to define the direction of influence in the press-politician relationship concludes that the linkage's characteristics are largely case-specific. In some situations, the press have the upper hand, while in other situations, the politicians drive the agenda.

The policy agenda relationship between political elites and the media has also been studied in lower levels of public office. Cook et al., (1983) and Protess et al., (1987) indicate that Chicago area policy elites had modest degrees of attitude change after being exposed to investigative reports about problems within that city. Pritchard (1986) reports that prosecutorial decisions are significantly predicted by the amount of media attention devoted to a certain case. More specific to terrorism, Atkins (1992) argues that governmental authorities often put various types of pressure on the media to cover or not cover terrorism, depending on the context. Finally, Schmid (1992) demonstrates that the president can be directly affected by mass media coverage of terrorism. Hence, the media can play a significant role in driving policy making while policy makers can similarly affect the media.

The Mass Media and Real-World Cues

Since terrorism appears to be covered by the media as the direct result of a terrorist incident, it is useful to draw a comparison between terrorism coverage and the actual incidence of terrorism. While many studies of terrorism and the media investigate why certain events, regions, and groups are covered, the present study evaluates whether media coverage accurately reflect an issue's "reality." Funkhouser's (1973) study of political and social issues of the 1960s examined real-world statistics and the press coverage relating to an issue, providing a theoretical background for the comparison of media coverage of an event and that event's occurrence in reality. Behr and Iyengar (1985) examined the issues of energy, unemployment, and inflation in both real-world measures or "cues," and in news coverage.

More specifically, Delli Carpini & Williams (1984, 1987) compared television portrayals of terrorism with the worldwide incidence of terrorism from 1969 to 1980. Significantly, this study found little or no relationship between terrorism coverage and the amount of terrorism occurring in a given year. Crelinsten (1989) dismisses this type of research as circular, since many chronologies of terrorism originate with mass media reports. Merely comparing press coverage of terrorism to a measure of terrorist activity does not entirely explain the accuracy of media portrayals of the terrorism issue. Clearly, the media do not operate in a vacuum. Events other than terrorism occur which may be equally newsworthy. In addition, the agenda-building hypothesis would indicate that the media are affected by the presidential agenda, as well as by terrorist events.

This study seeks to evaluate if a symbiotic relationship exists between terrorism and the press. If indeed a symbiotic relationship were in place, it would follow that levels of terrorism and print media coverage would be somewhat correlated. Hence, increased levels of media coverage would relate to an increased incidence of terrorism for any one year. However, the various agenda-building studies indicate that the media have a strong relationship with political elites. The expectations of the symbiotic relationship hypothesis may very well compete with the expectations of the agenda building hypothesis. The research question analyzed by this study is: Does media coverage of terrorism correlate more with the actual incidence of terrorism or with the presidential agenda?

Method

This study uses several steps to answer the research questions raised above. Data for the study are drawn from The New York Times file within the Lexis/Nexis on-line database, the Vanderbilt Television News Index and Abstracts, and from State Department terrorism statistics.

The Mass Media

Content analysis has been the preferred method for analyzing the effects of terrorism on the mass media (Morris & Hoe, 1987; Crelinsten, 1989; Seger, 1990). This study analyzes coverage of terrorism in the evening news broadcasts of the three major television networks and in The New York Times between 1981 and 1994. A number of researchers of terrorism and the mass media use indexes to find articles for analysis. Such an index-based approach is not without precedent. Crelinsten (1989) and Jablonski (1992) have examined press coverage of terrorism by examining the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and the New York Times Index among other indexes. This approach has come to be known as the Greenfield Index (Greenfield, 1961; Beniger, 1978). One way of avoiding some of the indexing problems (duplication, omission, etc.) is to acquire all terrorism articles for the time-frame studied. However, the researcher must still develop an efficient time-saving procedure for identifying and retrieving terrorism articles. With relatively recent advances in on-line databases, this problem has largely been solved.

The New York Times file in the Lexis/Nexis on-line service was used for this study. The search term employed was "terrorism or terrorist and date aft 1980 and date bef 1995." This is an admittedly large search term which resulted in the retrieval of over 10,000 articles. Each article was content-analyzed in order to ascertain the story's specificity regarding terrorism, as framed by Alexander's (1992) definition of terrorism. This procedure resulted in discarding articles which used the terms terrorist or terrorism in a context external to the definition used by this study. (For instance, some athletes were described as "terrorists" during competition.) The unit of analysis is the number of terrorism articles in the New York Times for each year.

Television news coverage of terrorism was measured via content analysis of the Television News Index and Abstracts for each month between 1981 and 1994. Since this resource directs the researcher to search for terrorism coverage by individual events, methods, and countries, each month's abstracts were reviewed individually (independent of the index). News stories were evaluated for their relationship to terrorism via the content of the abstract. Hence, if the abstract described something as "terrorism," or "terrorist," then that story was counted as covering terrorism. The unit of analysis was individual stories about terrorism. This method, although tedious, avoids possible duplication due to redundant entries under different headings in the index. Similarly, "hidden" stories under seemingly unrelated headings are detected. The monthly frequency of terrorism stories and articles was used primarily because this method was more efficient in terms of time and money than calculating column inches or minutes of coverage. The use of frequency counts has been found to be a fairly reliable measure of media content, and is comparable to the tabulation of column inches (Stone and McCombs, 1981).

Presidential Emphasis of Terrorism

The president's public relations initiatives regarding certain parts of his or her political agenda are often emphasized in public speeches, press conferences, releases, and proclamations. It is possible to measure and study those aspects of what the president wishes to emphasize by examining presidential documents. The resource used for this purpose is the Public Papers of the Presidents, also part of the Lexis/Nexis on-line data base. The frequency of mention of terrorism or terrorist was calculated for each year of the study. Each item retrieved was content analyzed to ascertain the context of the use of the terms "terrorist" or "terrorism." The unit of analysis was each document, speech, or other proclamation which include the words "terrorism" or "terrorist." The frequency of presidential statements was used for the same reasons as in the media measure.

The Real-World Cues

The annual frequency of worldwide terrorist activity is published by a variety of sources. However, several of the sources are not comprehensive or require that the researcher have high level security clearances. For instance, Delli Carpini & Williams (1984, 1987) use the ITERATE terrorism database, which only extends to 1980. The most comprehensive publicly available statistics on terrorism are kept by the U.S. State Department's Office of Counter-Terrorism. The Patterns of Global Terrorism 1994 report gives annual totals of terrorist incidents through 1994. The unit of analysis is the annual total of terrorist incidents between 1981 and 1994.

Analysis

Accurately analyzing the acquired data in this study beyond a graphical depiction is difficult. Since the measures are placed in a time series frame, one would expect to be able to run an autoregressive model (Box & Jenkins, 1976). However, since there are only 14 time points, it is difficult to use models of this type, such as autoregressive integrated moving averages (ARIMA) (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Repeated measures ANOVA also cannot be used because the data represent frequency counts, not means. It is possible, however, to meaningfully compare the agendas if one allows for the presence of autocorrelation within each measure. The presence of autocorrelation might mean, for a given series, the error terms or residuals at different points in time are correlated. When this occurs, the regression model fits the data very well, since the model underestimates the true variability of the residuals. The result is a deceptively inaccurate model, which in turn leads to inaccurate testing of hypotheses. This study utilizes the AREG command within the SPSS statistical software (SPSS, 1988). This command allows the researcher to estimate more accurate regression coefficients from time series by statistically controlling for autocorrelation. In addition, this procedure uses the same algorithm that ARIMA modeling uses for assessing autocorrelation (SPSS, 1988). The results of this analysis, then, are fairly accurate statements of the statistical relationships among the time series.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Levels of presidential emphasis, mass media coverage, and terrorism were acquired for the years 1981-1994. A first level of analysis, comparing the number pairs for each year, reveals that incidents of terrorism increase starting in 1984. A general increase in terrorism continues until 1988, with a record level of terrorism occurring in 1987. In 1989 and 1990, however, the number of incidents fell to the same levels seen in the early 1980s. The New York Times and the television networks paid greater attention to terrorism, peaking in 1986. Presidential emphasis follows a similar pattern. Were a symbiotic relationship between the media and terrorism to exist, one would expect that terrorist incidents and terrorism stories would correlate. Hence, when one measure peaks, the other would follow suit, and vice versa. In addition, if the media follow or mirror presidential emphasis, one would expect the levels of press coverage to be similar to presidential mentions of terrorism.

Table 1

Terrorism, Presidential Emphasis, and the Mass Media, 1981-1994

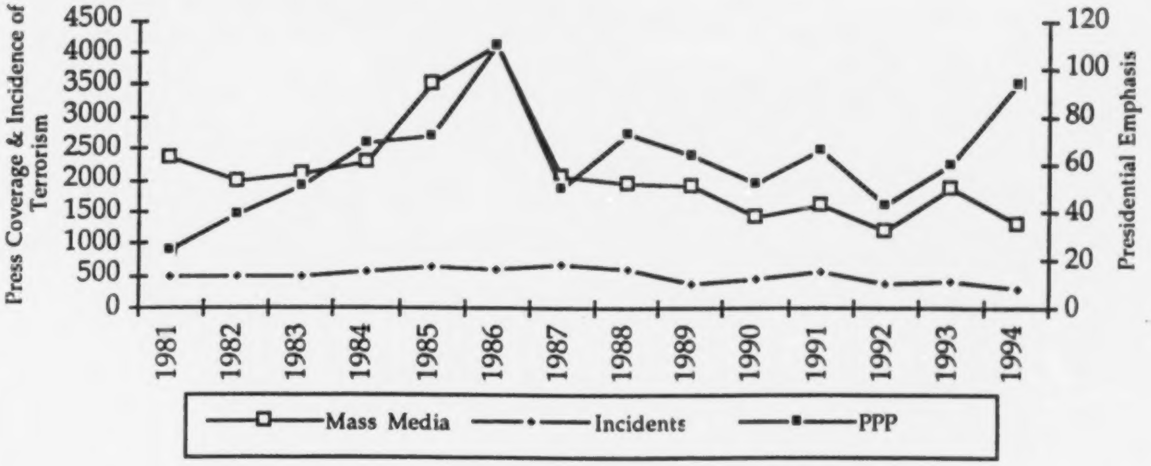
Year	Stories	Incidents	Presidential Emphasis
1981	2378	489	24
1982	2001	487	39
1983	2082	497	51
1984	2292	565	69
1985	3510	635	72
1986	4097	612	110
1987	2059	665	50
1988	1965	605	73
1989	1918	375	64
1990	1430	437	52
1991	1617	565	66
1992	1190	363	43
1993	1866	431	60
1994	1309	321	94

Looking at the peak incident years of 1985-1988 (see Table 1), one finds that in 1986 there were 110 presidential mentions of terrorism (the highest number of mentions in the study) 780 terrorist incidents (the fourth highest number of incidents in the years examined) and 4097 stories in the mass media (the highest number of stories). The data for 1987, however, illustrate a change in the trend of press coverage and presidential emphasis, but not in the levels of terrorist violence.

There were approximately 800 terrorist incidents in 1987, the highest number on record. The 1987 media measure drops to 2059 articles and stories, nearly half of that of the previous year. Moreover, the media measure is at its lowest since 1982. Presidential emphasis (50 mentions) is likewise at a five-year low. The year 1988 shows a continuation of this trend. There were 798 terrorist acts and 1,965 articles and stories that year. The data for 1987 and 1988 are important because they indicate that the press did not respond to terrorist acts as frequently as in the past. Additionally, the data heavily dispute the assumption that terrorist incidents are always newsworthy--a key assumption if one assumes that a symbiotic relationship does indeed exist between terrorism and the mass media.

Figure 1

Terrorism, Presidential Emphasis, and the Mass Media, 1981-1994



It is clear from visual inspection of Figure 1 that both presidential and mass media attention to terrorism decrease by large amounts in 1987. The shape of the graph after the key year of 1986 mimics an abrupt intervention in a quasi-experimental design. In other words, the data resemble a laboratory intervention at a known point in time (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Since this study can isolate an event at a known point in time, the Iran-Contra scandal, one can see that the decrease in the two measures may not be entirely due to chance. Of particular interest is an unexpected finding: Terrorism decreases two years after decreases in media and presidential emphasis. This occurs twice, in 1989 and 1992.

If a true symbiotic relationship existed between the mass media and terrorism, one would expect that, in general, terrorism coverage would correlate with the number of terrorist incidents in each year. Terrorism and terrorism-related coverage roughly follow this pattern until 1987 and 1988. With record levels of terrorism, one would expect high levels of terrorism-related coverage in the print media. Four different methods of analysis indicate that record levels of terrorist incidents for 1987 and 1988 were met with smaller, not higher, levels of press coverage.

Statistical Analysis

The three agenda measures were analyzed using time series analysis. Specifically, regression models were computed for the three series controlling for first-order autocorrelation. The descriptive comparison of frequencies suggests at this point that the reporting of terrorism is not clearly event driven. Indeed, changes in government policy, as seen by presidential references to terrorism, seem to have a greater influence on press coverage. To test this conclusion, and to better evaluate our research question, three regression models were tested, in which each of the variables was dependent on the other two. In the first model, media coverage from both The New York Times and the Television News Index and Abstracts is explained by the incidence of terrorism and by presidential references to terrorism, as shown in Table 2.

From this regression table, it is fairly clear that media coverage of terrorism over the 14-year time span is more related to the presidential agenda than the actual incidence of terrorism. The presidential agenda explains about one third of the variance in media coverage and is significant at the .02 level. While this finding

Table 2

Effects of Terrorism and the Presidential Agenda on Mass Media Coverage

Variable	B	SE B	β
Terrorist Incidents	.878	1.671	.123
Presidential Agenda	19.328	6.990	.650*

*$p < .02$

leaves room for other explanatory factors, it does indicate that media coverage is arguably influenced by (or at least highly related to) the presidential agenda as far as terrorism is concerned. A reversal of this model is shown in Table 3, in which the presidential terrorism agenda is explained by both the incidence of terrorism and media coverage.

Table 3

Effects of Terrorism and Mass Media Coverage on the Presidential Agenda

Variable	B	SE B	β
Mass Media Coverage	.022	.008	.666*
Terrorist Incidents	-.011	.057	-.047

*$p < .02$

Table 3 indicates that press coverage of terrorism is significantly correlated with the presidential agenda. The levels of terrorism for the time frame analyzed in this study, however, do not appear to correlate with the presidential agenda. The lack of relationship between the annual levels of terrorism and the agendas of the president and the media are puzzling. If the media have a symbiotic relationship with terrorism, one would expect a measure of inter-relationship between reporting and terrorist incidents. In addition, one would expect the presidential agenda regarding terrorism to be event-driven. However, there is scant evidence to indicate such a relationship.

Table 4

Effects of Mass Media Coverage and the Presidential Agenda on Terrorism

Variable	B	SE B	β
Mass Media Coverage	.030	.058	.217
Presidential Agenda	-.336	1.729	-.080

Table 4 turns the variables around one more time and looks at the probability that terrorist incidents are the outcome of media coverage or presidential attention. The findings indicate no significant relationship between the levels of terrorism on an annual basis and the agendas of either the media or the president. Not surprisingly, the data appear to indicate that terrorists do not necessarily rely on the media in conducting terrorist acts.

It is interesting, and important, to note that ordinary least squares regression models were also calculated to ascertain what effect, if any, the time series analysis would have on the study. The regular regression models indicated findings quite the opposite from those reported by the time series analysis. Indeed, the results of this "regular" analysis indicated a strong statistically significant correlation between the incidence of terrorism and the agendas of the president and the media. In other words, without allowing for the effects of autocorrelation, the findings of this study (and others) could incorrectly indicate very different, if not opposite, conclusions.

Discussion

Prior research states that the media follow acts of terrorism, and terrorism follows media coverage. This study provides indications that Delli Carpini & Williams (1984, 1987) were correct in their general conclusion that the mass media do not accurately reflect terrorism. However, their conclusion that the disparity between coverage levels and the "reality" of terrorism is a random phenomenon is not supported. The data reported in this instance may be evidence of the effects political elites have on the mass media. This study also disputes the existence of a direct symbiotic relationship between the mass media and terrorism. For a symbiotic relationship to exist, terrorism and terrorism-related coverage would remain mathematically stable. The mass media do not operate in a vacuum. Several factors can drive the media agenda, such as public opinion, political elites, and news values.

A true symbiotic relationship implies that terrorist incidents are always newsworthy. Since this analysis shows that, despite record levels of terrorism in 1987 and again in 1988, press coverage of terrorism dropped in dramatic fashion, one must conclude that a simple, direct symbiotic relationship does not exist as such. The presidential public relations measure indicates a high degree of correlation between mass media coverage and the presidential agenda. Indeed, the historical placement of the change in trends of mass media and presidential attention to terrorism indicate that the president may have had a motive to downplay the war on terrorism. The media, in this instance at least, appear to be dominated more by external events or forces than they are by terrorist incidents.

Does media coverage of terrorism correlate more with the actual incidence of terrorism or with the presidential agenda? The present analysis gives a strong and somewhat surprising indication that the mass media take their cues on terrorism from the president (and vice versa). The actual levels of terrorism appear to have a weak role in this process. The symbiotic relationship hypothesis might have been applicable a decade ago, but the data for the late-1980s and early-1990s directly dispute such a relationship. The decrease in terrorist events in 1989 and 1990, however, might be used as evidence of a time lag between media coverage and incidents of terrorism. One can argue that a decreased focus by the press on terrorism might result in a decrease in the number of terrorist incidents in a subsequent year. Perhaps terrorists do need publicity to carry out their future plans. If, as the literature indicates, terrorists depend on press coverage, terrorist groups may scale back their activities when they cannot guarantee their actions will generate publicity. Due to the nature of this type of analysis, however, researchers must wait for several years to pass, so more data can be produced for analysis. Figure 1 does indicate that terrorism decreases after presidential and press attention abates. Indeed, this phenomena can be observed twice, in the decrease in terrorist incidents in 1989 and again in 1992. Both decreases occur two years after a reduction of attention paid to terrorism by both the president and the mass media.

There are, however, problems with such a time-lag conclusion. First, no evidence of a time lag in the data exist until very recently. There are just as plausible alternative explanations for a decrease in terrorist incidents that are not related to the media, such as the disintegration of the Soviet Union or the aftermath of Desert Storm. Second, press coverage of terrorism is incident-driven, not vice-versa. The press cannot cover something that does not exist or is not necessarily newsworthy. It has been frequently argued that terrorists need publicity to survive. That is not to say that the media also need terrorists to thrive. It is this point more than any other which serves to dispute the existence of a symbiotic relationship between terrorists and the mass media. Instead, one can plausibly argue that terrorists need the mass media much more than the mass media need terrorists. The mass media can focus on other stories, such as what is emphasized by political elites. Terrorists, however, rely upon media coverage for dissemination of information about their mission, credibility, and purpose. Finally, the stability of the relationship between the mass media and terrorism indicates that the theory of a symbiotic relationship was once applicable, but for a variety of reasons this viewpoint has lost some of its salience. This study constitutes evidence that the old order which gave rise to the symbiotic relationship hypothesis should be questioned.

The key question now becomes, what happened to cause the mass media to downplay terrorism and focus on other issues? Future research should attempt to shed light on this question. Some evidence already exists which indicates that the Iran-Contra affair and the drug issue captured increasing amounts of attention in the public spotlight at nearly the same time terrorism faded from coverage (Jenkins, 1989; Gonzenbach, 1992). Certainly, Iran-Contra constituted a direct embarrassment to President Reagan's anti-terrorism policies (Emerson, 1987). Indeed, Simon (1990) contends that Reagan's preoccupation with resolving terrorist conflicts led to the ill advised arms for hostages swap with Iran. Kornbluh and Byrne (1993) observe that the scandal "made a farce of President Ronald Reagan's highly publicized maxim that 'America will never make concessions to terrorists'" (p. xv). Thus, the Reagan Administration had a motive for downplaying terrorism in 1987, despite the record levels of terrorism for that year.

Of further interest is the decrease in media coverage in 1987 and then the decrease in terrorist incidents in 1989. If linkage between these two phenomena are described and analyzed, a more accurate picture of the relationship between terrorism and the mass media may be developed. Hence, future research should utilize agenda setting approaches to determine if the drug war and Iran Contra helped knock terrorism off the public agenda. However, terrorism is difficult to study using such methodology. Terrorism is rarely identified as a significant component of open-ended most important problem questions. Indeed, a check of public opinion polls for the period studied indicates that terrorism is mentioned as the nation's most important problem by more than five percent of survey respondents only twice[2].

Additionally, the role played by the increased lethality of terrorist acts could be examined through the methodology employed within this inquiry. In short, does the level of violence employed affect the number of articles about a terrorist act? If total acts of terrorism increase, but media coverage decreases, this may be due to an absence of "spectacular" incidents of terrorism. Indeed, if the United States is not a target of a terrorism "spectacular" in a given year, one could expect to see a decrease in coverage.

Finally, statistics regarding terrorism need to be made more objective, universal, and available. The only comprehensive data bases regarding terrorism are dominated by the Western conception of terrorism. This may bias terrorism data by ignoring actions of "friendly" governments and organizations. For scholarly inquiry, data on terrorism need to reflect all perceptions of the problem, not just one ideological mindset. Academic works on terrorism are plagued by a lack of quantitative data. Too many conclusions are made about the increase of terrorism with only normative data. For policy-making, an objective and available count of terrorism could help foster an understanding of violence levels worldwide.

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[2] The Roper On-line file, contained in the Market library of Lexis/Nexis was examined. The search term which was used was "Most important problem and terrorism or terrorist and date aft 1980." Only 2 questions indicated that more than 5 percent identified terrorism as the most important problem facing the nation. The dates for these questions were April 1986 and November 1985.

Future research on the relationships reported here should also focus on the ability to make better statements regarding the direction of the press-president agenda-building relationship. An original conception of this study included using quarterly data instead of annual data. While it was easy to collect data for the media and presidential measures in these time periods, it was impossible to acquire terrorism data on such a basis. Indeed, an individual inside the Office for Counter-Terrorism indicated that statistics on terrorism are aggregated into annual totals. The components of those totals (months and quarters) have been discarded. Coincidentally, Cook & Campbell (1979) isolate this problem as one of the major limitations of using archival data. More time points would mean more accurate time series modeling, which would hopefully lead to drawing precise conclusions about the direction of the agenda-building relationship between terrorism, the president, and the mass media.

In addition, many policy agenda studies examine public opinion measures within an agenda-setting framework (for instance, Beniger, 1984). The original design of this study called for inclusion of "most important problem" results for national surveys between 1981-1994. However, terrorism rarely achieves a statistically significant percentage of these surveys. This would make the public opinion measure all but meaningless for this study. There is evidence that policy elites "sense" public opinion from media coverage anyway. Cohen (1983) noted that policymakers perceived public opinion from media news coverage. The same situation may be at work here. Future research should focus on finding public opinion measures that provide a meaningful snapshot of attitudes and opinions about terrorism.

There are a number of varied limitations to this study. As with any content analysis, the researcher cannot claim a causal relationship between two or three variables in multiple sets of time. Another limitation is that the media might be affected by an increased degree of violence in general. Related to this concept is the notion of desensitization. In other words, as terrorism becomes less novel, it might take more violence to make the news than in the past. Gatekeepers might reward increasing degrees of terrorist violence over time, thereby selectively covering or ignoring incidents which are not as violent. Worldwide political changes which occurred during the time-frame analyzed by this study may also affect some of the measures used. Specific limitations revolve around inter- and intra-coder reliability. Only one coder was used. More coders would serve to decrease the effect, if any, on one individual's subjective analysis.

Finally, use of the State Department's statistics of terrorism may be problematic. These statistics started in 1968 and have changed in scope and definition several times. The definition of terrorism that is used in any one year may be subject to political motivations. Multiple sources for terrorism statistics might make terrorism studies more reliable and less subjective in nature. Ideally, regions and tactics should be compared to further evaluate if the decrease in press coverage reported here is a function of media bias, the absence of terrorism "spectaculars," or the influence of political elites.

Overall, this study does provide some evidence which contradicts the existence of a direct symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the mass media. In addition, this study indicates that the mass media mirror presidential public relations agendas more closely than real-world cues. These findings are similar in nature to the long line of agenda-building studies examining the relationship between the media and political elites. Finally, it is clear that when the mass media react to forces other than reality, there is a danger that certain issues are ignored or overemphasized. Either option may result in a distorted sense of an issue's importance.

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SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, 'THE WAR ON DRUGS' AND THE ANABOLIC STEROID CONTROL ACT OF 1990: A STUDY IN AGENDA BUILDING AND POLITICAL TIMING

By

Bryan Denham
School of Journalism
330 Communications Building
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996-0330
(423) 974-5155
e-mail "denham@utkux.utk.edu"

Paper presented at the 1996 AEJMC National Conference
Anaheim, California

Bryan Denham recently earned a doctorate in Communications at the University of Tennessee.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, 'THE WAR ON DRUGS' AND THE ANABOLIC STEROID CONTROL ACT OF 1990: A STUDY IN AGENDA BUILDING AND POLITICAL TIMING

Introduction

Though professional football players began using the anabolic steroid Dianabol as early as the 1960s, only in recent years has the use of steroids in sport become politicized. In the most basic sense, this study aspires to explain why. The study examines how Sports Illustrated reported steroid use in athletics during the 1980s, and it assesses hearings on the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990 to evaluate the magazine's role in the policymaking arena. As will be demonstrated, Sports Illustrated played a substantial role in shaping opinion about the arcane issue of drugs in sports--an issue with which middle America continues to have only passing familiarity. Several individuals who testified before the House and Senate had earlier appeared in the magazine, and several Sports Illustrated articles appeared in the appendices of the Congressional and Senate hearings. These hearings, of course, were held at the height of America's "war on drugs," when the opportunity to legislate chemical agents of all kinds was perhaps its greatest.

In exploring why elected officials legislated anabolic steroids when they did, several questions should be addressed: (1) What was going on in government--and politics in general--when the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Crime and the Senate Committee on the Judiciary heard expert testimony relating to anabolic steroids? (2) What was happening in popular culture that may have increased the salience of steroid use as a political issue? (3) Who stood to gain from the enactment of policy and who stood to lose? and (4) Why did government wait decades before considering the issue in an official capacity?

Before addressing these questions and moving to the government hearings, some scientific background should be offered for readers who are unfamiliar with performance-enhancing drugs. Anabolic steroids are synthetic derivatives of the male hormone testosterone, and they contain both androgenic and anabolic properties; that is, the agents have the capacity to intensify masculine features and to build lean muscle tissue. The drugs synthesize protein into muscle at an accelerated rate, thus leading to increases in muscular size and strength. Steroids also assist in the recuperation of muscle tissue following intense athletic activity.[1]

While steroids are indicated in the treatment of anemias and severe catabolism, athletes in contemporary sport have used these drugs as ergogenic aids to performance. With competition for starting positions and college scholarships more keen than ever, there is a perception among athletes, particularly among those in combative sports such as football and wrestling, that if they don't seek a competitive edge, they will be left behind by those who do. United States Olympian Carl Lewis has suggested that present-day high school athletes ask themselves a very basic question: "Do I want to take steroids and compete or not?"[2] In reality, it isn't just competitive athletes who use anabolic steroids; adolescent males continue to use the drugs for cosmetic purposes, hoping newfound increases in muscularity and physical strength will impress their female peers.[3]

The study begins with a review of Congressional and Senate hearings and follows with a more detailed analysis of how Sports Illustrated--a magazine with an average circulation of 5 million--reported the use of steroids in athletics during the 1980s.[4]

The Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989

On March 23, 1989, the Subcommittee on Crime of the Committee on the Judiciary

House of Representatives heard several experts testify with regard to the use of performance-enhancing medications in sport.[5] The testimony was in reference to the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989,[6] a piece of legislation that came one year after the Subcommittee had amended House Resolution 5210, the Omnibus Drug Initiative Act of 1988; that amendment required that the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act provide felony penalties for distributing, or possessing with intent to distribute, anabolic steroids without a prescription. Ultimately adopted as part of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, the amendment became law in November of that year--the year George Bush won the presidency and vowed to continue America's "war on drugs."

The Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 appears to have been triggered by a letter that Pete Stark, a Congressional Representative from California, received from his constituent Charles Miller, a 78-year-old from San Leandro. Miller had been offended by a catalog he had received in the mail encouraging him--and many others--to "Say No to Drugs, Say Yes to Steroids, Come Direct to Us." The catalog, which came from Tijuana, Mexico, included a price list for all kinds of steroids, and it led Stark to initiate House Resolution 995, which allowed the United States Postal Service to take a more active role in controlling the transportation of anabolic steroids. At the hearings, Stark described H.R. 995 as a "reasonable, and Constitutional, approach to halting the offensive solicitation of Americans by Mexican-based pharmaceutical firms to smuggle 'drugs' across our borders."[7]

With respect to rhetoric, one can observe some similarity between Stark's comments on H.R. 995 and drug issues in general; that is, a third-world country is at the heart of a major smuggling operation, and it is up to American policymakers to take charge of the situation. In fact, whether policy should have been enacted at all is still open to debate, for the elimination of steroids produced by established pharmaceutical firms may have encouraged young Americans to go in search of the drugs elsewhere--namely through the American black market, long known for circulating bogus placebos and toxic imitations of various steroids.

Apart from the justness of H.R. 995, what is of particular interest to this paper is the inclusion of a powerful article from Sports Illustrated in the hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989. The article, titled "The Nightmare of Steroids," provided a shocking, first-person account of steroid use in college football. Tommy Chaikin, who played for the University of South Carolina, teamed with Sports Illustrated writer Rick Telander to produce the dramatic report. Figure 1, which displays the article's dominant themes and phrases, provides an indication of just how compelling the report was.

Presumably, members of the Subcommittee on Crime had read the article as background before listening to testimony at the 1989 Hearings; as support for this presumption, Chairman William J. Hughes asked aloud if Chaikin, the football player who had recounted his "nightmare" experience with steroids, was present. He was not.

Thus, while the 1989 hearings may not have been triggered by the Sports Illustrated article, its inclusion does give rise to scholarship in agenda building. In their book about public opinion during Watergate, Lang and Lang distinguished this term from the more commonly cited term agenda *setting*, explaining that agenda building "is a collective process in which media, government, and the citizenry reciprocally influence one another in at least some respects."[8] Berkowitz later explained that "when the focus is not on policymakers' personal agendas, but instead on the broader societal context where public issues surface and gain salience, the mass media become only one indicator of public sentiment, and the term *policy agenda building* is more accurate."[9]

As discussed, anabolic steroids had been used by athletes decades before the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990 were ever conceived by legislators. But in the midst of America's "war on drugs," the use of steroids by athletes and others became more salient to legislators and their constituents. Why this sudden interest and why the need to legislate these chemical agents? Dramatic press coverage is a possible explanation.

As Zucker has explained, the more the public relies on media for information about an issue--and anabolic steroid use was certainly a "low threshold" or "unobtrusive" issue in the middle to late 1980s--the more the public agenda will be consistent with the press agenda.[10] Since it began reporting the use of steroids in athletics, Sports Illustrated has had a very clear agenda: To demonstrate to readers the dangers associated with using anabolic steroids for performance gain. The titles of several major articles reflect the manner in which it has covered steroid use: "The Steroid Predicament"; "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions"; "The Nightmare of Steroids"; "A Peril for Athletes"; "The Loser"; "Hit for a Loss"; "The Death of an Athlete"; "`We Can Clean it Up'"; "`I'm Sick and I'm Scared'"; "A Doctor's Warning Ignored."[11]

The last three titles above were drawn from articles published after the enactment of the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990. They are included here to demonstrate the power of Sports Illustrated to build the agenda for sports reporting in United States newspapers. Figure 2 shows a demonstrable increase in newspaper articles from 1991--when a haggard Lyle Alzado appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated and inside attributed his rare form of brain lymphoma to anabolic steroid use--to 1992.[12] As well, there was an appreciable increase in newspaper coverage from 1988--when the Chaikin article stunned sports fans and social commentators alike--to 1989. When one takes into account the fact that Congressional Representatives included in their 1989 hearings a Washington Post article describing public reaction to the Chaikin article published in Sports Illustrated, the power of the magazine to help build an agenda.[13]

In the 1980s, Sports Illustrated framed anabolic steroids as a major threat to young athletes, including terms like "huge dimensions," "nightmare," "peril" and "death" in the titles of articles. As part of the agenda building process, Sports Illustrated linked steroid use to a major secondary symbol, "the need to protect America's youth." And as the following paragraphs will discuss, Congressional Representatives followed suit at the 1989 Hearings. Finally, well-known and credible individuals did become involved, and as the Alzado coverage demonstrates, newspapers increased their reporting substantially the following year. Sports Illustrated is an institution in American athletics, and when it reports on controversial events, other publications tend to follow suit.

"The search for the link between public opinion and public policy," Pritchard explains, "often focuses on the press. After all, elected public officials and whatever nonelected policymakers they may appoint do not always (or even often) have direct measures of public opinion about issues that must be addressed. In the absence of direct measures of public opinion, policymakers may tend to use indirect indicators such as how much attention the news media devote to a given issue."[14] Kennamer explains further that "public officials often use the news media as a surrogate for public opinion," and that "the upshot is that public officials may entertain perceptions that may have been derived by unsystematic means, that may not be independent of themselves, of a public opinion that may not really exist."[15]

To further develop the role of Sports Illustrated and other publications in the agenda building process, Merriam has discussed the way in which an event such as the killing of two DEA agents in Mexico or the cocaine-related death of basketball star Len Bias triggered increases in the coverage of drug issues. When Bias overdosed on cocaine in 1986, his death "posed an almost media-perfect example of the dangers of drug overdose to a successful role model for youth. Concern for his death matched closely with the concerns national media and government leaders were seeking to present."[16] Likewise, the horrors Tommy Chaikin experienced with anabolic steroids matched closely with the coverage Sports Illustrated was seeking to present.

Lang and Lang offer additional insight about the agenda-building process and distinguish between "low threshold" and "high threshold" issues:

> On matters of concern to people, because they fall within their direct experience, as is the case with various bread-and-butter, sickness-and-health, life-and-death issues, the media clearly lack power to suppress concern. But they can do more than stimulate interest. By directing attention to these concerns, they provide a context that influences *how* people will think about these matters--where they believe the fault lies and whether anything (and what) should be done. Publicity given to essentially private concerns transforms them into public concerns. Whether or not it increases the problem for those affected, it does increase morale and legitimate the will to protest."[17]

Johnson, et al. have explained that "sensational coverage can exaggerate the extent of the problem while sparse coverage can slow the rise of concern,"[18] and Yagade and Dozier have observed that media exert more influence on concrete issues such as drug abuse than they do on more abstract matters.[19]

With respect to the "war on drugs," Mackey-Kallis and Hahn have summarized the views of other scholars and political commentators by suggesting that "American policy debate about drugs, relying on victimage rhetoric, was more successful at (mis)placing blame for the drug problem than at finding solutions for it."[20] They continued:

> Fighting a 'war against drugs' meant getting 'tough' and getting tough meant finding someone to blame and punish for drug use in America. Although appealing as a rhetorical strategy, guilt-based rhetorics like victimage are problematic. While simplified solutions may come from them, a significant result of misplaced blame is that, despite the mis-identification of the problem, the rhetoric takes on a life of its own, creating victims, a citizenry immune to the effects of the rhetoric, and a political climate which may hamper future rhetorical efforts. In the American drug war waged from 1986-1991, the enemies--drug lords, drug pushers, and corrupt or inefficient politicians--became the scapegoats successfully but inappropriately blamed and symbolically sacrificed for our guilt regarding drug use and our failure to stop drug use in America.[21]

Johnston has faulted media with putting visual drama above substance in coverage of drugs, thus discounting prevention and drug reduction strategies in favor of shootouts and high-speed chases. He explained also that drug problems in the United States peaked much earlier than 1986, the year in which media coverage peaked.[22]

"By fanning up moral panics over drug use," Young observed, "(media coverage) contributes enormously to public hostility to the drug taker and precludes any rational approach to the problem."[23] Horowitz explained further:

> Whatever the physical and psychological effects of an illegal drug may be, the social and political consequences loom far larger as dangers. Many identify the drug culture as middle class, link it to the culture of students and minorities, connect it to the demimonde of rock and jazz music, and view it as the rallying cry and unifying point for many political protest rallies and massive rock festivals. In a sense, those who adhere to a strictly legal view that abolition is warranted on the grounds of the unworkability of present laws are on thin ice--since many laws related to race relations could be contested on similar grounds of pragmatism. Therefore, if we have a cardinal need to get beyond the medical haze, there is a parallel need to get beyond the juridical maze.[24]

The preceding observations about press coverage of drugs--observations that are central to several of the propositions advanced in this paper--are consistent with the contentions of former U.S. drug agent Michael Levine. In the pop-culture book about Levine's career as an agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, aptly titled Undercover: The Secret Lives of a Federal Agent, author Donald Goddard recalled an instance in which Levine spoke to a group of PTA members.[25] "Dealers don't spread this disease," Levine insisted. "They don't have to. They let *you* do that. Once you catch it, *you'll* go looking for *them*...Put one of you straight, concerned citizens in jail for five years for possessing just one small part of the drugs I know you got out there in your homes, and I guarantee you 90 percent of the rest of you won't think its worth the risk."[26]

While the Goddard book may have been geared toward entertainment and popular culture and not a toward community of scholars, its content lends credible support to the observations of academic researchers. Both the mainstream book and the scholarly articles relate to this paper in that anabolic steroids were part of the athletic community long before their use was "officially" addressed in 1988, when the "war on drugs" went from one administration to the next.

Charles Yesalis, an established researcher on drug use in athletics and one of the people who testified before the Subcommittee on Crime in March 1989, explained at the hearings:

> The first articles I have seen in the press about anabolic steroids were in a three-part series in Sports Illustrated in 1969. This is not a new problem. What has changed since then is that there has been an unfortunate diffusion of this innovation, as we say in academic jargon, down from the elite athlete level to the college level, and it has now diffused from the division I to the division II to the small division III schools, to the high schools, down to the junior high school level.[27]

Just as middle class Americans use euphoric drugs to alter their state of consciousness, then, prominent athletes use anabolic steroids to enhance performance. As Horowitz explained, the social and political implications may loom much larger than the physical and psychological effects, for athletes use steroids as a result of win-at-all-costs thinking on the part of team owners and coaches, as well as indirect pressure from fans who want to see crushing hits in football, freakish physiques in bodybuilding and blazing speed in track and field. In a sense, legislators attempting to bring steroid use to a halt is analogous to a surfer telling the wave he's riding to pause for moment so that may ponder the act of surfing and consider the possible risks. The societal wave driving steroid use in athletics is tidal, and laws making it illegal to take steroids for performance gain have basically been driven into the sand by the black market and an occasional pharmacist willing to look the other way.

At the height of America's "war on drugs," American policymakers could reap political benefit by launching assaults on illicit drug use. As an example, when William J. Hughes, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime and Congressional Representative from New Jersey, brought the 1989 hearings to order, he quickly cited a seemingly arbitrary estimate of one million steroid users in the United States, 25 to 50 percent of whom were "young people."

Richard Baker, a Congressional Representative from Louisiana, said at the 1989 hearings that he was "worried about the social fabric of our country and the impact of drugs on our youth," and that "(our youth) believe that if they get their hands on this stuff they will become successful."[28] Jack Swagerty, then Assistant Chief Postal Inspector with Criminal Investigations, said "The distribution of controlled substances and of anabolic steroids poses an immediate threat to the well-being of our nation's youth."[29] Don Reynolds, who served as Director of the Drug Testing Committee of the Florida High School Activities Association, testified that anabolic steroid use could trigger "very harmful long range effects, both physical and psychological, on our young athletes,"[30] and Olympic sprinter Carl Lewis said steroid users were "setting a terrible example for kids."[31] Finally, Charles Yesalis said "we have a significant problem in the school system."[32] Yesalis cited his research indicating that 6.6 percent of male high school seniors took anabolic steroids, and of those 6.6 percent, 40 percent were hardcore users.

Thus, "the need to protect America's youth"--a major theme of the entire "war on drugs"--appears to have been a driving force behind the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, just as it had been an underlying theme in Sports Illustrated's reporting of steroids in sport. And while one magazine can hardly be credited with driving the legislative agenda, it can be credited with helping to build that agenda. The magazine played a role in the next set of hearings as well.

From the House to the Senate

Shortly after the March 23, 1989 hearings in House of Representatives, the United States Senate began to hear testimony in separate hearings titled "Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports--The Medical and Social Costs of Steroid Abuse." The Senate hearings took place before the Committee on the Judiciary on April 3 and May 9 and focused largely on college and professional football.[33] In his opening remarks, Chairman Joseph Biden spoke of the effects of steroids on adolescents, suggesting that "young people represent an especially vulnerable target and an especially valuable market for what has become an everyday business of peddling black market steroids."[34] Biden made reference to the $2.8 billion anti-drug legislation that had just passed, and he also estimated that black-market steroid distribution had become an industry with revenues between $300 and $400 million.

The first panel of athletes who testified at the hearings included Evelyn Ashford, Diane

Williams and Pat Connally, each an accomplished track athlete. They spoke of the pervasive use of steroids in track & field, and Williams recounted the side effects that she had experienced while using steroids, substances that she knew very little about but was encouraged to take for their performance-enhancing effects. Among the adverse effects she experienced were clitoral enlargement ("to embarrassing proportions"), intense itching, depression, vaginal bleeding and lower abdominal pain. Ashford said she felt "despair" over athletics, for athletes had lost their sense of pride in competing naturally (this was less than a year after Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was stripped of his Olympic gold medal for testing positive for steroids). "We have got a serious problem," Ashford contended,[35] and Connally had earlier observed that "allowing the athletic congress to investigate this problem and its coaches is like asking Dracula to protect the blood bank."[36] Biden had mentioned how difficult it was to get college and professional coaches to testify at the hearings, thus lending support to Conally's observation.

The second panel consisted of the following individuals: Pat Croce, conditioning trainer for the Philadelphia Flyers and 76ers; Mike Schmidt, third baseman for the Philadelphia Phillies; Mike Quick, captain of the Philadelphia Eagles; Otho Davis, trainer for the Eagles; and Dorothy Baker, a member of the Executive Board of the United States Olympic Committee. Baker addressed media coverage of steroid use after Croce discussed the problems steroids pose for adolescents: "With regard to the general population, especially high school and college-age individuals, the use of anabolic steroids in males interested in looking good, not just performing better, but looking good, is as prevalent as the condition of anorexia in females. Body beautiful is 'in' and steroids are a quick and effective means of obtaining a larger, leaner look."[37] Again, the American youth is at the heart of discussion.

For purposes of this research, the most pertinent testimony came from Dorothy Baker, who explained: "A letter to the editor in the December 5 (1988) Sports Illustrated magazine in response to the Tommy Chaikin article prompted me to write Governor Castle to start the ball rolling on legislation in Delaware to make it a felony in the state of Delaware for physicians to prescribe anabolic steroids for the purpose of athletic enhancement."[38]

Baker's testimony is central to this study, for it demonstrates the power of Sports Illustrated to have an affect on policymaking. At the time, middle America and mainstream journalists knew little about anabolic steroids, and it appears that if any publication was going to report extensively on such an arcane issue, it would be the quintessential sports magazine. It did report the issue--in a very dramatic fashion--and the people who served as news sources for the magazine also provided testimony to members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

One of those news sources was Charles Yesalis, who testified before the House Subcommittee on Crime and the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Yesalis testified before the Senate along with Dr. David Katz of the Harvard Medical School and Duke University School of Medicine, and Dr. Edward Langston, a representative of the American Medical Association. Yesalis explained that "the appetite for these drugs has been created by our society based on our interest in appearance and win at all cost,"[39] and Katz discussed his research demonstrating a strong relationship between steroid use and the development of psychotic syndromes, some of which include psychotic episodes, depression and mania.

Yesalis, Katz and Langston formed the panel of medical experts for the April 3, 1989 Senate Hearings, and they offered commentary as to the research on anabolic steroids--namely, whether the research offered evidence in support of adding steroids to the existing Controlled Substances Act. Because of their medical value, Langston contended, anabolic steroids should not have been included under Schedule I, home to various euphoric drugs with no medical worth.[40] Yesalis also pointed to the lack of knowledge concerning the long-term deleterious effects of steroids, and he equated their use to playing Russian roulette. The observations of Yesalis, Katz and Langston are important here, for Sports Illustrated's framing of steroids as a "problem of huge dimensions" runs a bit contrary to what members of the American Medical Association were willing to concede by 1989. In addition, the magazine also received periodic rebuttals from members of the sporting community, some of whom had better credentials to comment on steroid use than most of the writers at Sports Illustrated. One such rebuttal came in September 1983, one month after former powerlifter Terry Todd had recounted his adverse experiences with steroids. Frederick C. Hatfield, Ph.D., then Scientific Editor for Muscle & Fitness magazine and a competitive powerlifter, wrote the following letter:

> Sir: Judging by your coverage of the anabolic steroid issue, one is forced to conclude that the only point of view that is legitimate is that steroids are bad, on the ground that they have potentially harmful side effects and on moral grounds. I do not wish to be an evangelist for the value of anabolic steroid use in sports, but you must recognize that there is another side to the story. In fact, as a world-class power-lifter, as well as a trained sports psychologist, I can tell you flatly that the most prevalent view among steroid users is that the benefits far outweigh the risks.
>
> Drugs are not inherently evil--misuse and abuse by people give them that connotation. I believe that drugs have been, are and will continue to be an important source of man's salvation. I also believe that there can be no nobler use for drugs than improving man's performance capabilities. Society demands bigger, faster and stronger athletes. The sacrosanctity of the sports arena, however, has been a hindrance to meeting this demand. Athletes are forced into the closet or toward ever more dangerous alternatives when it comes to doing things that society may frown on. I suggest that educating society at large, as well as steroid-using athletes, is the most prudent and efficient means of controlling drug abuse. Legislation and prohibition have never solved any of society's problems. Instead, they have exacerbated them.[41]

Hatfield's 1983 letter apparently did not affect Sports Illustrated's coverage of steroid use in athletics, for as the next section of this paper indicates, the articles published after 1983 were far more dramatic than the one written by Terry Todd.

On May 9, 1989, about a month after the initial Senate Hearings had taken place, the Committee on the Judiciary heard testimony from a second series of professional football coaches and players. The commissioner of the National Football League, Pete Rozelle, joined NFL Executive Vice President Jay Moyer and coaches Marty Schottenheimer of the Kansas City Chiefs and Chuck Noll of the Pittsburgh Steelers in testifying about the use of performance-enhancing drugs in professional football. And while their testimony had only a modest connection to the reporting of steroid use by Sports Illustrated, it spoke volumes about the sociology of sport in the United States. "As is true under our policy on cocaine and other so-called street drugs," Rozelle explained, "we will not hesitate to remove those who use steroids from professional football."[42] Schottenheimer continued: "I am of the opinion that in the National Football League today there is no evidence that management supports in any way the use of these anabolic steroids."[43]

But testimony heard during the second session of the May 9 Hearings told a different story. The next panel included Gene Upshaw, executive director of the National Football League Players Association; Bill Fralic, a three-time All-Pro offensive lineman with the Atlanta Falcons; and Steve Courson, a former offensive lineman with the Pittsburgh Steelers and Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Courson had gained attention in 1985 after disclosing his steroid use to Sports Illustrated as part of the article "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions." He had explained to writer Jill Lieber that he could not have survived in the NFL without keeping himself on the same "playing field" as his competitors, and that "Seventy-five percent of the lineman in the NFL are on steroids, and 95% have probably tried them. The strongest people--the strongest athletes--in the world are all using steroids...So you've got to get on the drugs if you want to survive."[44]

At the 1989 Hearings, Courson made reference to the 1985 Sports Illustrated article, and he explained how his revelations had left him black-balled in the National Football League, thus lending support to the observations of Fred Hatfield regarding the sacrosanctity of sport; if a problem arises that might embarrass the institution, issue a series of politically correct statements and hope the problem will be swept under the carpet.

Fralic, for one, was not about to wield a broom. "I believe steroid use is rampant among the NFL," he explained, "and that includes my own team. It is rampant in colleges, and it is rampant in high schools...The emphasis on winning at all costs is becoming epidemic."[45] Upshaw offered additional sociological insight:

> There is the pressure to earn money; there is the pressure to keep a job; there is pressure to keep ahead of the competition; and there is pressure to win. Anabolic steroid abuse is an institutional phenomenon in football. By that, I mean the impetus for steroid use most often has come from the sport's management, i.e., coaches, owners and others who urge 'bigger and stronger is better.'[46]

The testimony of Upshaw, Fralic and Courson bore little resemblance to the earlier testimony of Rozelle and Schottenheimer, demonstrating how people on one side of the fence--those who have a vested interest in winning and preserving the reputation of professional football--view the problem differently than those who actually play the game. To preserve his job, a coach must win, and to preserve the sanctity of sport, potential problems and embarrassments must be marginalized. One cannot help but take note of the monetary issues here, for the third panel of witnesses--a series of college football coaches--also told a story contrary to the first. This panel included Joe Paterno, head coach at Penn State; Bo Schembechler, head coach at Michigan; Harold Raymond, head coach at Delaware; and Joe Purzycki, head coach at James Madison. The college coaches were quicker than the professional coaches to acknowledge the performance edge gained from using steroids, and Purzycki summarized their observations in powerful manner by suggesting that "We have a massive and serious problem on all levels of college football."[47]

Thus, out of the 1989 hearings came some emotional testimony from those on the inside of college and professional football. The entire Sports Illustrated article, "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions," was included in the hearings and presumably was read by members of the Committee on the Judiciary. In addition, several of the magazine's sources testified at the hearings, demonstrating that people inside the policymaking arena sometimes must look to media outlets when highly arcane issues are addressed. The Committee, in short, had to begin its research somewhere, and because steroid use in sport was--and still is--a relatively narrow topic, Committee members may have looked for insight from the world's most prestigious sporting publication.

The Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990[48]

As a result of testimony heard in the two years prior, Congress in 1990 passed legislation that classified steroids as a Schedule III Controlled Substance.[49] The Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990, or House Resolution 4658, amended "the Controlled Substances Act to provide criminal penalties for illicit use of anabolic steroids and for coaches and others who endeavor to persuade or induce athletes to take anabolic steroids, and for other purposes."[50]

The Schedule III classification is reserved for drugs whose use may result in low-to-moderate physical dependence or high psychological dependence. Possession results in up to one year in prison, and distribution or possession with intent to distribute results in up to five years for the first offense and 10 years for the second. If the distribution is to a person under 21, the offender may serve up to 10 years for the first offense and 30 years for the second.

"It is time to take strong measures against anabolic steroid use," remarked Mel Levine, a congressional representative from California. "Steroid use may be the quiet side of the drug war, but it is an extremely serious side of it."[51]

Leslie Southwick, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, added that "Now we are seeing the involvement of more hardened criminals in the wholesale smuggling of foreign manufactured products into the United States and the domestic clandestine manufacturing of counterfeit steroid products that pose other health risks."[52]

And Ronald Chesemore, Associate Commissioner for Regulatory Affairs in the Food and Drug Administration, explained that "Thus far, the steroid investigations have resulted in the seizure of over $18 million worth of illegal drugs, $500,000 in cash, numerous cars, guns, computers, and other equipment associated with the smuggling and illegal sale of anabolic steroids."[53]

Levine, Southwick and Chesemore each made reference to the "war on drugs" in their comments about anabolic steroids. That steroids are not euphoric drugs and have legitimate medical value seemingly were discounted in favor of invoking rhetoric about "cash," "guns," "smuggling," "clandestine manufacturing," and "hardened criminals"--all terms associated with the "war on drugs" and a Friday evening broadcast of "Miami Vice."

So at this point one might ask whether the House of Representatives and the Senate would have legislated anabolic steroids when they did had at least two things not happened: (1) Had Sports Illustrated not published its series of dramatic articles about steroid use in athletics, thus helping to build the agenda for legislation, and (2) Had the "war on drugs" not been initiated in the late 1980s. In 1989 and 1990 legislators had the perfect opportunity to act on behalf of their constituents and America's youth. The "war on drugs" was at its peak and many sports fans were exposed to dramatic anecdotal reports about the adverse effects of anabolic steroids, as presented in Sports Illustrated. Because the potentially adverse effects of steroids had been exposed, legislators were not thrust into the precarious position of rocking American athletics for no apparent reason; in short, they stood to lose less than they might have lost at other points in time. The problem had surfaced with Ben Johnson losing his gold medal and college football players experiencing steroids psychosis, and the window of opportunity--the "war on drugs"--was wide open.

Sports Illustrated and Drug Use in Athletics during the 1980s

This section reviews several articles published in Sports Illustrated in the 1980s that dealt with anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing medications.

In August 1983, a former powerlifter named Terry Todd wrote a lengthy feature article for Sports Illustrated in which he detailed his experiences with anabolic steroids.[54] Todd provided a brief history of the drugs and explained how the substances had enhanced his weightlifting ability as a young man. His account served as the first in a series of Sports Illustrated articles devoted to the humanistic elements of steroid use.

As an aspiring powerlifter during the 1960s, Todd had intermittently used the steroid methandrostenolone--trade name Dianabol--to enhance his performance as a strength athlete. Ciba Pharmaceutical had developed Dianabol in the late 1950s, and the drug became popular in athletic circles for its powerful anabolic effects and modest androgenic properties; that is, athletes stood to synthesize protein into lean muscle mass at an accelerated rate while avoiding the powerful masculinizing effects of other steroids.

While Todd recounted his turbulations with steroids and the problems he might have faced had he not ceased use, the more compelling information in his story involved other athletes. For example, Todd recounted the health problems encountered by Larry Pacifico, winner of nine consecutive world powerlifting titles during the 1970s. At 35 years of age, Pacifico had nearly died from advanced atherosclerosis, a condition attributed to his longtime use of steroids by he and his physician. Pacifico recounted:

> One day in the fall of 1981 I was in the recovery room of a hospital following elbow surgery, and I had this terrible squeezing in my chest. The next morning they catherized my arteries, and I learned that two arteries were approximately 70 percent blocked and one was almost completely closed--99.9 percent. I was immediately scheduled for a triple bypass, but they decided to try an angioplasty...I'm convinced my steroid use contributed to my coronary artery disease. I'm certain of it, and so is my doctor. I should have realized it was happening, because every time I went on a cycle of heavy steroid use, I'd develop high blood pressure and my pulse rate would increase.[55]

The above passage is central to this paper for two reasons: First, it illustrates the potentially deleterious effects of anabolic steroids; and second, it illustrates the manner by which an anecdotal report can generate a potent reference to the adverse effects. Todd suggested that by the early 1980s athletes in sports such as bodybuilding and powerlifting were absorbing massive amounts of several types of anabolic steroids. "Exactly how high the levels have gone," Todd explained, "is a matter of conjecture, but I have both testimony and published reports indicating that on occasion athletes have taken in less than two weeks the 6,000 milligrams that I, weighing more than 300 pounds, took in four years"[56]

Two years after Todd addressed steroids from a weightlifter's perspective, Sports Illustrated staff writer William Oscar Johnson wrote a lengthy feature about performance-enhancing drugs.[57] His article, titled "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions," addressed steroid use among professional, college and high school athletes. Like other authors, Johnson did not hesitate in providing a list of the health problems steroids can cause. He wrote:

> The risks inherent in the administration of steroids include liver and kidney disorders, hypertension, decreased sperm count, aggressive behavior and impotence in men, and menstrual irregularities and masculinization in women. Some of the side effects are believed by medical experts to be irreversible...There are also psychological side effects from steroid usage. Steroids are sometimes addictive, producing a sense of supersized manhood that can only be maintained through continuing or increasing usage.[58]

While the preceding symptoms have been found in select users of anabolic steroids, the reality is that many athletes who use moderate dosages do not experience health problems. Steve Courson, a former linemen in the National Football League, did not experience problems with steroids while he used them, and as he explained to Sports Illustrated writer Jill Lieber as part of the Johnson article, he could not have survived in the NFL without keeping himself on the same "playing field" as his competitors. Courson explained that football was his business, and in his view, taking steroids was a means of staying in business. Had he not taken them, he most certainly would have been left behind by the athletes who did. He later echoed those sentiments when he testified before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

Courson's revelations concerning the pervasive use of steroids in the National Football League won him few friends, and when the Tampa Bay Buccaneers released him after his disclosures to Sports Illustrated, not a single team expressed interest in the Pro Bowl lineman. Rampant drug use in the NFL had been disclosed to journalists at a prominent athletic magazine, and the journalists had then conveyed that information to millions of readers worldwide. Johnson set the stage by reviewing the potential health problems associated with anabolic steroid use, and Courson followed with a dramatic anecdotal report in which he spoke of his reasons for taking the drugs.

A few years after retiring from the National Football League, the linemen admitted himself to a hospital after experiencing chest pains. Diagnosed with advanced cardiomyopathy, a condition in which the muscles of the heart atrophy over time, Courson appeared to have experienced some of the adverse effects Johnson listed. Later, in a book titled False Glory, Courson reflected on his condition and on his decision to come forward about steroid use in the National Football League. "I had broken the Cardinal rule of athletics: Don't get caught, and don't tell the truth. I was doubly stupid--I came clean without having been caught."[59] Thus, consistent with his testimony at the 1989 Senate hearings, Courson made some powerful observations about the sociology of American sport; that is, problems and potential embarrassments are to be marginalized as quickly and efficiently as possible.

At the 1988 Olympics, Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson could not escape embarrassment when he was caught with the drug stanozolol in his system after winning the gold medal in the 100-meter dash. On the ensuing week's cover, Sports Illustrated featured a picture of Johnson with the word "Busted" in bright, bold type.[60] Inside, William Oscar Johnson and Kenny Moore reviewed the events that led to the sprinter's forced relinquishment of an Olympic gold medal. Their article, titled "The Loser," painted a bleak picture of Ben Johnson in addressing the growing problem of drugs in athletics.[61] The authors pointed out that stanozolol was widely regarded as a dangerous anabolic agent, thought to cause cancer of the liver. A quote from an American trainer added to the dramatic coverage: "His eyes were so yellow with his liver working overtime processing steroids that I said he's either crazy or he's protected with an insurance policy."[62]

In fact, more than 70 cases of peliosis hepatitis--the appearance of blood-filled cysts in the liver--have been attributed to anabolic steroid use.[63] By drawing attention to potential health problems in the same article that recounted one of greatest disgraces in Olympic history, Johnson and Moore added to the already dramatic coverage of steroid use by Sports Illustrated during the middle to late 1980s. Shortly thereafter, the magazine featured its most dramatic story of all.

Tommy Chaikin, a football player at the University of South Carolina, teamed with Sports Illustrated writer Rick Telander to produce a harrowing story of steroid use. The article began with the following sentences:

> I was sitting in my room at the roost, the athletic dorm at the University of South Carolina, with the barrel of a loaded .357 Magnum pressed under my chin. A .357 is a man's gun, and I knew what it would do to me. My finger twitched on the trigger...I was in bad shape, very bad shape. From the steroids. It had all come down from the steroids, the crap I'd taken to get big and strong and aggressive so I could play this game I love...I felt as though I were sitting next to my body, watching myself, and yet I was in my body, too. I was trying to get up the final bit of courage to end it all...[64]

And so began Chaikin's account of his experience with anabolic steroids. Aptly titled "The Nightmare of Steroids," the article sent shock waves through the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Interestingly, the University of South Carolina was the same school that Steve Courson, the lineman whose experiences with steroids were mentioned earlier, attended following high school. Both Courson and Chaikin reported a "hands off" atmosphere where the private lives of athletes were concerned, and both reported that the coaches tacitly encouraged steroid use by subscribing to an ethic of winning at all costs. In short, the more violent the players became in a game like football, the more likely they were to belong to a winning team.

"There were fights all the time in practice," Chaikin noted, "a lot of them instigated by coaches. They would always let the fights go, too, let the guys beat the hell out of each other. If you showed a violent nature, regardless of your athletic ability, it definitely swayed the coaches' opinions in your favor."[65]

Included in the adverse effects of anabolic steroids are increases in aggression, violent mood swings, and in some instances, a state known as steroid psychosis. "That's the thing about football--once you whip up anger, you can twist it, channel it, aim it, just like a water hose," Chaikin continued.[66] Like Courson, Chaikin explained that he would not have been competitive without using steroids; in other words, use of the drugs in college football had proliferated to the point where choosing not to use them posed a significant threat to earning a starting position. One might posit at this point that steroids did not offer an advantage to a minority and a disadvantage to a majority; they offered a disadvantage to a minority and an advantage to the majority. As the Chaikin article points out, the need for athletes to place themselves on the same figurative playing field as their opponents was widespread by 1988. The longtime assertions of medical practitioners--that empirical evidence suggesting performance enhancement did not exist--seemingly had become moot in the eyes of athletes. Chaikin explained:

> People who say anabolic steroids don't work don't know what they're talking about. You've got to experience it to know what I mean. Your muscles swell; they retain water and they just grow. You can work out much harder than before, and your muscles don't get as sore. You're more motivated in the weight room and you've got more energy because of the psychological effects of the drug.[67]

Having elucidated the positive, though, Chaikin moved quickly to the negative:

> Besides the muscle growth, there were other things happening to me. I got real bad acne on my back, my hair started to come out, I was having trouble sleeping, and my testicles began to shrink--all the side effects you hear about. But my mind was set. I didn't care about that other stuff. In fact, my sex drive during the cycles was phenomenal, especially when I was charged up from all the testosterone I was taking. I also had this strange, edgy feeling--I could drink all night, sleep two hours and then go work out. In certain ways I was becoming like an animal.[68]

Ironically, becoming like an animal probably increased the athlete's chances of finding a starting position on the South Carolina football team. "Coaches would walk in and see the stuff, but nobody gave a damn," Chaikin wrote. "One of the coaches came in for a room check once, saw a vial with a skull and crossbones on the label and said, 'I used to use Dianabol myself.'"[69]

Chaikin also discussed an incident that occurred in a nightclub where he worked during one of his college summers. On a particular evening, he was dancing with a young female when a second man, a Marine, bumped into his dance partner. Chaikin confronted the Marine about the contact and the following events followed:

> (The Marine) put his beer down and came up hard under my chin with his hands, and a slice of my tongue about an inch long went flying out of my mouth. I didn't even notice it. I saw red. I felt an aggression I'd never felt before. I hit him so hard that he went right to the floor. He was semiconscious, and I got him into a headlock and started hitting him in the ribs and kneeing him in the back. I wanted to hurt him real bad. I could literally feel the hair standing up on the back of my neck, like a wolf or something.[70]

On an ensuing page, Chaikin continued:

> One of my teammates hit a guy in a bar one time, and after the guy fell to the floor with his jaw collapsed and some teeth knocked out, the player kicked him in the head. Blood was everywhere. I'd say steroids had something to do with that...I really feel that under certain conditions some of the guys who were on steroids would have been perfectly willing to beat someone to death.[71]

Finally, the most compelling story:

> ...And when I got drunk, oh brother! One night in my dorm room, I pulled a shotgun on the pizza delivery boy, threw him down and put the gun in his face. It was loaded and I could have blown the kid all over the floor, but I was just fooling around. It was the kind of thing I thought was funny.[72]

As the opening passage of his story indicated, Chaikin began to have severe anxiety attacks after prolonged use of anabolic steroids. He was on the verge of suicide on several occasions, and appears to have experienced steroid psychosis on many more. His story tells of smashing refrigerators with baseball bats, ripping telephones out of walls, fighting brutally with fellow players and others outside of football, and of going out for a drive with teammates and shooting cattle in nearby pastures. Even the most seasoned coaches and athletes found Chaikin's story horrific, and four months later, a story concerning the death of a high school football player may have pushed anabolic steroids to an even higher place on the agenda.

Sports Illustrated published a lengthy feature article about a small-town football player named Benji Ramirez, an athlete who had taken steroids to enhance his performance in sport.[73] Ramirez had collapsed at football practice one afternoon, and after being taken to the Ashtabula (Ohio) County Medical Center, the 17-year-old senior had expired, the result of an apparent heart attack. An autopsy later revealed that Ramirez had died of cardiac arrhythmia, a condition precipitated by a diseased and enlarged heart. "It is the strong opinion of County Coroner Dr. Robert A. Malinowski that use of anabolic steroids did in some way contribute to the death of Benjamin Ramirez," stated the final autopsy report, as cited in the article.[74] Malinowski did not establish scientific evidence linking the death to steroid use, yet he did not hesitate in calling the use a contributing factor.

The article began with a full-color, two-page photograph of Ramirez in his coffin, football and other memorabilia arranged neatly inside. Pictures of the high school athlete with his friends were placed throughout the article, and on the last page, a photograph of the fresh grave reminded readers of the ultimate finality. A 17-year-old was dead, and medical professionals were pointing the finger at anabolic steroids.

It appears legislators could not ignore the events that took place during the middle to late 1980s, nor could they ignore a series of powerful articles published in Sports Illustrated. By the end of the decade, they passed the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990.

With the latter act came more coverage of performance-enhancing drugs in Sports Illustrated. No article, though, proved as significant as the 1991 account of former professional football player Lyle Alzado, who attributed his rare form of brain cancer to years of steroid use. Though legislation had already passed Congress, Alzado's story impacted athletics at all levels. Scientific evidence did not link Alzado's illness to steroid use, but the opening paragraph of his story implied otherwise:

> I lied. I lied to you. I lied to my family. I lied to a lot of people for a lot of years when I said I didn't use steroids. I started taking anabolic steroids in 1969, and I never stopped. Not when I retired from the NFL in 1985. Not ever. I couldn't, and then I made things worse by using human growth hormone, too. I had my mind set, and I did what I wanted to do. So many people tried to talk me out of what I was doing, and I wouldn't listen. And now I'm sick. I've got cancer--a brain lymphoma--and I'm in for the fight of my life.[75]

For purposes of this study, the Alzado article may be as important as any other, for it illustrates the manner in which a highly reputable magazine can define a cause-and-effect relationship when science cannot. Robert Huizenga, Alzado's physician, attributed the lymphoma to steroid use, just as Malinowski did with the death of Benji Ramirez. But in both cases, a scientific cause-and-effect relationship could not be established. Thus, while scientists would not contest the potentially deleterious effects of steroids, they would raise a number of questions where the deaths of Ramirez and Alzado were concerned.

Greenblatt offered a medical perspective prior to Alzado's death:

> The extensive recreational use of illegal centrally-acting chemicals is thought to be increasing, possibly leading to a broadening epidemic of drug addiction and dependence, impaired performance in the workplace, which endangers the public safety, and in some cases even leads to deaths directly attributable to drug abuse...Reliable statistical or epidemiologic verification of these assumptions is, however, largely lacking, and it is very likely that the magnitude of the drug abuse problem has been greatly exaggerated by journalistic excesses focusing particularly on drug abuse by athletes, and the tragic drug-related deaths of a few young athletes (footnotes eliminated).[76]

Brown and Walsh-Childers explain how "journalistic excesses" can then affect a change in public policy:

> Although the impact of media coverage of drugs on governmental drug policies may not be explicitly demonstrable, the implications seem obvious: If public concern about a health issue, which probably increases support for intervention policies, is itself influenced by media coverage of the health issue, then greater media attention to the issue probably will tend to increase policy makers' interest in developing intervention policies.[77]

Two weeks after Alzado's death, U.S. News & World Report devoted its cover to "Muscle Drugs."[78] Inside, the article made reference to Alzado's warnings in Sports Illustrated and also included quotes from Steve Courson, the football player who had come forward about steroid use in the NFL. The article featured a Sports Illustrated photo of a massive Courson performing biceps curls, and it also contained quotes from Yesalis. Two questions arise here: (1) Would U.S. News & World Report have contacted these sources had they not appeared earlier in Sports Illustrated? (2) Would U.S. News & World Report have covered the issue at all had a haggard Alzado not gone public in the athletic magazine? Given the timing, it would be difficult to deny an association. Figure 2 shows a demonstrable increase in mainstream reporting of anabolic steroids following Alzado's admissions, and Figures 3 and 4 illustrate further how peaks in magazine coverage were followed by peaks in academic journals. Consistent with mainstream reporting of performance-enhancing drugs, MEDLINE and PSYCHLIT hits peaked in 1989, 1990 and 1991. The issue salience of drugs in athletics, then, appears to have been greatest after Ben Johnson lost his Olympic Gold medal and Sports Illustrated devoted dramatic coverage to the use of steroids in college and professional football.

It is important also to consider the political climate of the late 1980s, for some of the hysteria surrounding recreational drug use may have contributed to the enactment of policy involving anabolic steroids. With a drug czar appearing regularly on television newscasts and footage of police officers wrestling crazed drug users to the streets of urban centers, the political climate seemed ideal for legislation to pass. The issue salience of illicit drug use had reached its peak, and legislators were thus in a position to effect a change and not risk political backlash. Parents of young athletes--and the athletes themselves--had been exposed to highly dramatic material in a reputable sports magazine, and while the evidence was primarily anecdotal, it nevertheless indicated the potentially adverse effects of steroid use.

Conclusions and Discussion

This study examined the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 and the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990 in light of several articles published in Sports Illustrated during the middle to late 1980s, when politicians declared "war" on drugs. Though steroids were used as early as the 1960s by professional football players, their use in athletics did not become politicized until prominent sports figures began speaking out on the subject and began receiving sanctions for using the substances. In 1988 alone, Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was stripped an Olympic gold medal because of a positive steroid test, and college football player Tommy Chaikin disclosed to Sports Illustrated and the world the horrors of his experience with steroids and human growth hormone.

Because drug use in athletics is a relatively arcane issue, few publications independent of the sporting arena have covered it the way Sports Illustrated has; and in some instances, the best mainstream publications could do was report the effects of athletes' disclosures to the magazine. While Sports Illustrated certainly could not be credited for driving the entire legislative agenda, it had a clear role in the Congressional and Senate hearings; appendices featured entire articles from the magazine, and several of the individuals who appeared in Sports Illustrated were invited to testify. Dorothy Baker of the United States Olympic Committee testified that a letter to the editor in response to the Chaikin article prompted her to write the governor of Delaware and request that legislation be passed to make it illegal for physicians to prescribe anabolic steroids for athletic enhancement.

All of this took place at the height of America's "war on drugs," a period during which legislators could reap political benefit by going after drug users and drug sellers. Legislators spoke continuously of the "need to protect America's youth," and their use of rhetoric appears to have worked; that is, anabolic steroids were ultimately classified as Schedule III Controlled Substances under the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990. The fact that many American youths were sent scrambling for black-market drugs apparently escaped the attention of law makers, who positioned steroids alongside everything from angel dust to crack cocaine.

In their purest form, anabolic steroids can cause health problems; that much has been documented. Yet many who use the drugs in moderate amounts never experience deleterious effects. Additionally, steroids have proven medical value in the treatment of breast cancer, anemia and severe catabolism. Just as marijuana is prescribed for people in severe pain, steroids are prescribed for people with various health ailments. Perhaps this is why the American Medical Association refused to recommend a Schedule I classification for anabolic steroids when legislators would have scheduled the drugs as such without hesitation. Indeed, there are two sides to every issue, and as the scholars who have written about America's "war on drugs" point out, a narrow-minded approach to a widespread problem can result in misplaced blame and convenient rationales for legislation. Whether steroids should have been legislated is open to debate; each side of the issue has convincing support, yet each side has its pitfalls. Drug use in athletics certainly has not gone away, as athletes continue to use steroids for performance gain. Now, however, they have been forced deeper into the closet while continuing to give American sports fans what they want to see: Massive bodies, crushing hits, superhuman strength and brutal intensity. The win-at-all-costs approach to sport in America is alive and well, and while legislation made it more difficult for athletes to obtain steroids by walking in the front door, it seems to have done little to deter them from walking in the back.

FIGURE 1

Dominant Themes and Phrases from Tommy Chaikin and Rick Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," Sports Illustrated, October 24, 1988.

Motivation for Using Steroids and Human Growth Hormone

- Observes how well players on steroids perform
- Feels nothing bad can happen at such a young age
- College athletes feel tremendous pressure to succeed--fear sitting on the bench and being "a failure"
- Sense of worth tied up in game
- Some parents push players extremely hard and expect results
- "Time for me to join the crowd"
- "Beef up and fight back"
- "Just give me what it takes to get big"

General Use of the Drugs

- Steroids easily obtainable
- TC scared because of horror stories and potential side effects: cancer, liver damage, heart disease, sex problems, etc.
- Some bodybuilders take $10,000 worth of human growth hormone per cycle--TC "only" gets $800 worth and fears it because of potential to cause acromegaly, or "Frankenstein's syndrome"
- TC says he would inject self with anything if it would increase size
- TC took anywhere from two to twenty times recommended dosages
- Mixed different drugs together to test effects
- Bottles of steroids lay all over dormitory room with syringes stuck in walls--coaches happen past and laugh
- TC takes equipoise, a horse steroid, parabolin and halotestin, among others
- Says halotestin should be called "Halocaust" because of the aggression it instills in user
- Teammates call TLC "Quasibloato" and "The Experiment"
- Vicious circle with steroids: Aggression and other changes make athletes want to get bigger and take more drugs
- "I've begun the chemical warfare"

Performance Effects from Use

- Wins Defensive Player of the Game at height of steroid use
- More motivation in weightroom
- More energy because of psychological effects
- Muscle swell--goes from 210 to 235 in eight weeks
- 500-pound bench press, 650-pound squat
- Becomes lean and quick
- Has good season, anticipates better one with more steroid use

Physical Effects/Symptoms

- High blood pressure, heart murmur, angina, sleeping disorder, liver problems, colitis, rectal bleeding, walking pneumonia, bronchitis, exhaustion, dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, cramping in legs, bad acne on back, hair loss, shrunken testicles, erratic sex drive, frightening aggressiveness, profuse sweating and hot flashes
- Loses control of bladder and bowels one day after class--prays he can make it to his car
- "Steroids were definitely wrecking my body"

Psychological Effects/Symptoms

- Feeling of being untouchable when using steroids
- Extreme depression when steroid cycles end
- Can't concentrate in class
- Constant anxiety--images of violence fill mind
- Paranoia and panic
- Pictures crushing people to death, tearing off their limbs
- Becomes "hard ass"--one of meanest players on team
- Rips helmets off of scout-team players
- Admitted to psych ward after holding .357 magnum under chin
- Wanted to commit suicide but feared being considered coward
- Says psychological effects of steroids are most drastic of all
- "Please God, let me make it through one more practice"

Anti-Social Behavior

- Sells steroids to teammates
- Experiments with cocaine, LSD
- Excessive consumption of alcohol
- Fights with police officers, marine, teammates
- Leads police on chase
- Rips door off hinges after argument with team trainer
- Demolishes refrigerator with baseball bat
- Rips phone off wall
- TC and teammates blast away street signs with guns, shoot windows out of bus in church parking lot--stray bullet hits cow in head and leaves it slumped over fence
- TC throws pizza delivery boy to floor and pulls shotgun on him

College Football Experience

- Initially gets pushed all over field--being "light and quick" not good enough, must be "big and quick"
- Had to suppress humanity to succeed--always hit the guy when he's down
- Linemen butt heads until one drops
- "Packer days"--reference to Vince Lombardi and conditioning drills that seemingly never ended--players drop from exhaustion
- Team physician shoots Xylocaine, a local anaesthetic, into injured players--no pain during game, agony afterwards

The Coaches

- Overzealous
- Untrustworthy
- Never stopped screaming at TC during first season
- No tolerance for injuries--took the attitude "You hurt? Put a little dirt on it"
- Favor drills that promote fighting
- Instigate fights in practice--let fights go until serious injury occurs
- Respect for violent players--want players as aggressive as possible
- Had ability to draw viciousness out of players--get response by going after ego and pride
- Only coach against fighting calls players weak for letting 120-degree heat get to them--stands in heat wearing black pants, black vinyl windbreaker, smoking cigarettes despite heart ailment
- Practice drills were a reflection of what coaches couldn't do themselves
- Made players of yesteryear sound like animals, killers--make current players feel they don't measure up
- See players as commodities because of pressure to win
- Fail to understand needs of 19-year-olds
- Pose as being against steroids
- One tells TC "Do what you have to do, take what you have to take"
- Admire TC for new size and aggressiveness after he does take
- No concern for physical symptoms in TC
- After TC has surgery to remove tumor, coaches take attitude "you're fine, get your ass out there, boy"
- Upset when TC gets stabbed in bar fight--could be embarrassing for program
- Ignore TC when he ultimately quits because of steroid experiences--want to sweep TC under the proverbial carpet
- Strength coach wanted to help players but knew he couldn't change their minds

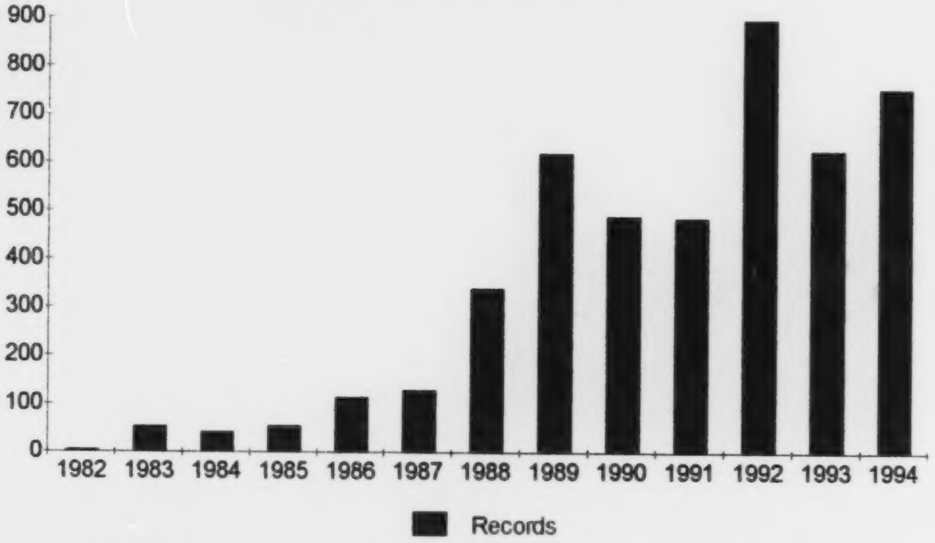
The Teammates

- At start, called TC "mild-mannered man from Maryland"
- Aggression levels and intensity "shocking"
- TC admires them for having meanstreaks he didn't have
- TC watches as one player rips the helmet off another and smashes him in the face with it
- Some players drink before games
- One player takes acid about 300 times
- One player collapses jaw of man in bar, knocks teeth out, kicks in head--blood everywhere
- TC feels certain that some teammates would beat someone to death
- Collective attitude: "Bury me massive, or don't bury me at all"
- In denial over what happened to TC--convince themselves that steroids affect him worse
- "Let's go kill somebody"

General Social Commentary

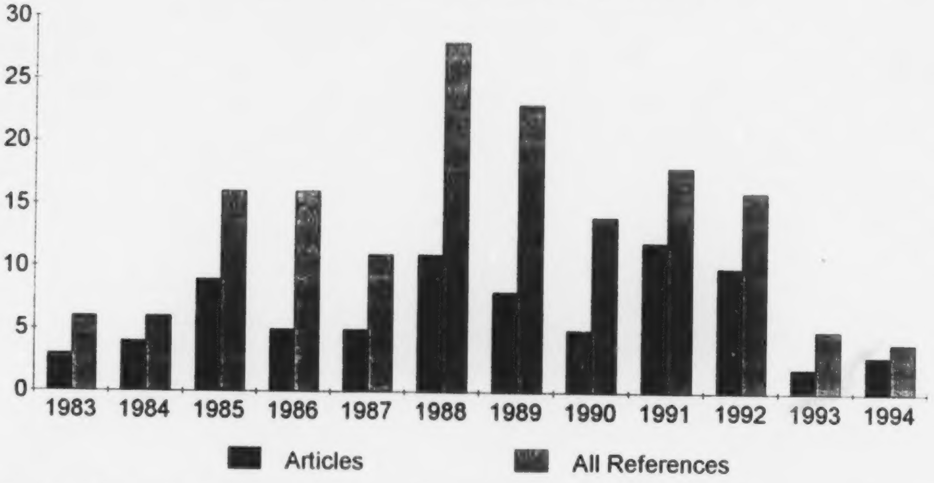
- Athletes are thrill-seekers--taking steroids just another way of living on the edge
- Part of just-take-a-pill-to-cure-anything society

Figure 2: Nexis Records by Year



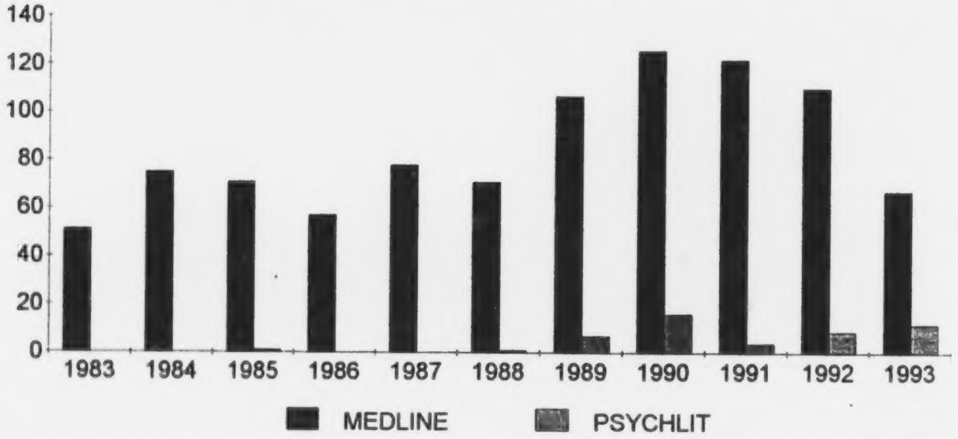
This chart shows the number of Nexis records found using the search term "Anabolic Steroids." Of particular interest is the increase in newspaper articles in 1989--the year after Ben Johnson was stripped of his Olympic gold medal and Tommy Chaikin disclosed in dramatic fashion the use of steroids in college football--and 1992, the year after a haggard Lyle Alzado appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and attributed his inoperable brain cancer to performance-enhancing drugs.

Figure 3: Sports Illustrated Records



This chart shows the number of *Sports Illustrated* records found using the search term "Anabolic Steroids." To the left in each year is the number of articles and to the right are all references (letters to the editor, news briefs, etc.). Magazine articles peaked in 1988 and 1991 and newspaper articles peaked in 1989 and 1992.

Figure 4: Other Database Searches



This chart shows the number of *MEDLINE* and *PSYCHLIT* records found using the search term "Anabolic Steroids." Both databases peaked in 1990, offering some evidence for agenda building. Recall that newspaper coverage had peaked the year prior.

Notes

1. For detailed discussion on the science of anabolic steroids, as well as the use of steroids by athletes in contemporary sport, see Charles Yesalis, *Anabolic Steroids in Sport and Exercise* (Champagne, IL: Human Kinetics, 1993); Robert Goldman and Ronald Klantz, *Death in the Locker Room II* (Chicago: Elite Sports Medicine, 1992).

2. Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Crime of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives, One Hundred First Congress, First Session on H.R. 995, The Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, March 23, 1989.

3. Goldman and Klantz, *Death in the Locker Room II.*

4. *Consumer Magazine & Agri-Media Source* (Wilmette, IL: SRDS, October 1994).

5. Members of the Subcommittee on Crime included: William J. Hughes, N.J.; Don Edwards, Calif.; Romano L. Mazzoli, Ky.; Edward F. Feighan, Ohio; Lawrence J. Smith, Fla.; Rick Boucher, Va.; Bill McCollum, Fla.; Larkin I. Smith, Miss.; George W. Gekas, Pa.; Michael DeWine, Ohio; Hayden Gregory, Counsel, Paul McNulty, Minority Counsel; Linda C. Hall, Editor.

6. One Hundred First Congress on House Resolution 995, Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, Serial No. 6.

7. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, 9.

8.Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang, *The Battle for Public Opinion: The President, The Press, and the Polls during Watergate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983): 58-59.

9.Dan Berkowitz, "Who Sets the Media Agenda? The Ability of Policymakers to Determine News Decisions." In J.D. Kennamer (Ed.), *Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994): 87.

10.Harold Gene Zucker, "The Variable Nature of News Media Influence." In B.D. Rubin (Ed.) *Communication Yearbook 2* (Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978). Also see Chaim Hirschmann Eyal, *Time Frame in Agenda-Setting Research: A Study of the Conceptual and Methodological Factors Affecting the Time Frame Context of the Agenda-Setting Process.* Doctoral Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1979.

11. Terry Todd, "The Steroid Predicament," *Sports Illustrated* (August 1, 1983): 62-77; William Oscar Johnson, Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions," *Sports Illustrated* (May 13, 1985): 38-61; William Oscar Johnson, "Hit for a Loss," *Sports Illustrated* (September 19, 1988): 50-57; Tommy Chaikin and Rick Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," *Sports Illustrated* (October 24, 1988): 84-102; Rick Telander, "A Peril for Athletes," *Sports Illustrated* (October 24, 1988): 114; William Oscar Johnson and Kenny Moore, "The Loser," *Sports Illustrated* (October 3, 1988): 20-26; Rick Telander, "The Death of an Athlete," *Sports Illustrated* (February 20, 1989): 68-78; Peter King, "`We Can Clean It Up,'" *Sports Illustrated* (July 9, 1990): 34-40; Lyle Alzado, "`I'm

Sick and I'm Scared,'" *Sports Illustrated* (July 8, 1991): 20-27; Shelley Smith, "A Doctor's Warning Ignored," *Sports Illustrated* (July 8, 1991): 22-23.

12. See Appendix for duplication of *Sports Illustrated* cover.

13. Sally Jenkins, "Athlete's Steroid Adventure Ended, but Impact Has Not; Upheaval Lingers at South Carolina, *The Washington Post*, (March 22, 1989): A1.

14.David Pritchard, "The News Media and Public Policy Agendas." In J.D. Kennamer (Ed.) *Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994): 107.

15.J. David Kennamer, "Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy: An Introduction." In J.D. Kennamer (Ed.) *Public Opinion, the Press, and Public Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994): 11.

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27. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, 46.

28. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, 13.

29. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, 35.

30. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989, 61.

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33. Members of the Committee on the Judiciary for the One Hundred First Congress included: Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Del. (chairman); Edward M. Kennedy, Mass.; Howard M. Metzenbaum, Ohio; Dennis DeConcini, Ariz.; Patrick J. Leahy, Vt.; Howell Heflin, Ala.; Paul Simon, Ill.; Herbert Kohl, Wis.; Strom Thurmond, S.C.; Orrin Hatch, Utah; Alan K. Simpson, Wyo.; Charles E. Grassley, Iowa; Arlen Specter, Pa.; Gordon J. Humphrey, N.H.; Mark H. Gitenstein, chief counsel; Diana Huffman, staff director, Terry L. Wooten, minority chief counsel, R.J. Duke Short, minority staff director.

34. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 3.

35. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 20.

36. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 9.

37. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 29.

38. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 35.

39. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 46.

40. Anabolic steroids are indicated in the treatment of anemias, hereditary angioedema and breast cancer.

41. Frederick Hatfield, "Pan Am Aftermath," *Sports Illustrated* (September 26, 1983): 86.

42. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 111.

43. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 142.

44. Johnson, "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions," 50.

45. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 179.

46. Hearings for Steroids in Amateur and Professional Sports, 169.

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48. For more information about this act and its legal ramifications, see Norma M. Reddig, "Anabolic Steroids: The Price of Pumping Up," *The Wayne Law Review* 37 (1991): 1647-1682; and Martin J. Bidwell and David L. Katz, "Injecting Life into an Old Defense: Anabolic-Steroid Induced Psychosis as a Paradigm of Involuntary Intoxification," *University of Miami Entertainment & Sports Law Review* 7 (1989): 1-63.

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51. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990, 11.

52. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990, 35.

53. Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 1990, 42.

54. Terry Todd, "The Steroid Predicament," *Sports Illustrated* (August 1, 1983): 62-77.

55. Todd, "The Steroid Predicament," 70. As an interesting aside, Assistant Chief Postal Inspector Jack Swagerty testified at the Hearings for the Anabolic Steroid Restriction Act of 1989 that Pacifico had once appeared on "60 Minutes" to discuss the perils of using anabolic steroids, and the very next day search warrants were executed by postal inspectors, Customs and FDA agents after Pacifico received a shipment of anabolic steroids by international mail. Swagerty also mentioned that Pacifico had been advertising bogus products in weightlifting magazines.

56. Todd, 68.

57. Johnson, "Steroids: A Problem of Huge Dimensions."

58. Johnson, 44.

59. Steve Courson and Lee Schreiber, *False Glory: The Steve Courson Story* (Stamford, CT: Longmeadow, 1991).

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61. Johnson and Moore, "The Loser."

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65. Chaikin and Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," 87.

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67. Chaikin and Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," 90.

68. Chaikin and Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," 90.

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72. Chaikin and Telander, "The Nightmare of Steroids," 100.

73. Telander, "The Death of an Athlete."

74. Telander, "The Death of an Athlete," 71.

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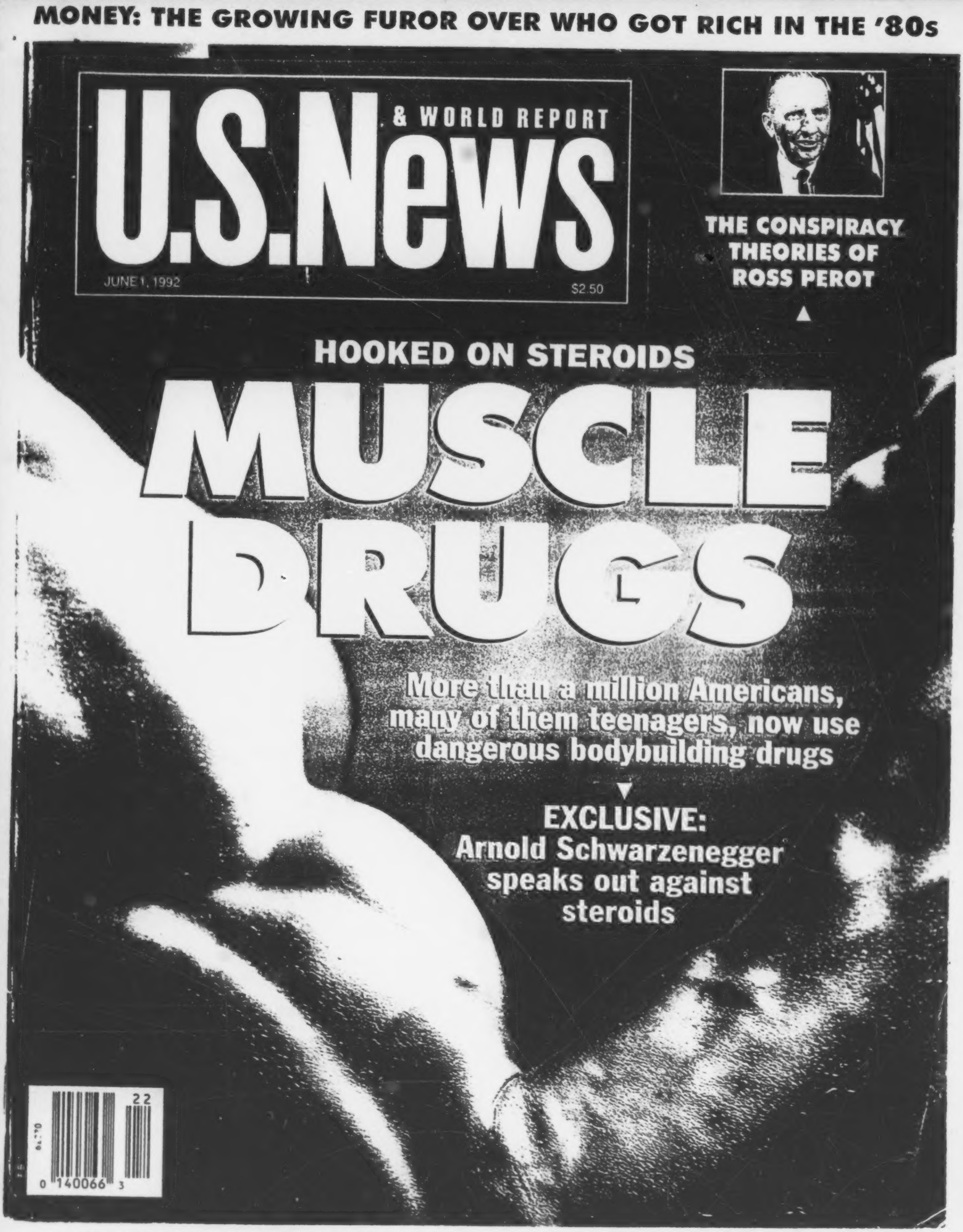

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News From Hell Before Breakfast:

The clash of military and media cultures during the Persian Gulf War

Submitted by:

Jay DeFrank
University of Colorado at Boulder
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Campus Box 287
Boulder, CO 80309-0287
(303) 772-6247

E-Mail: defrank@rintintin.colorado.edu

News From Hell Before Breakfast:
The clash of military and media cultures during the Persian Gulf War

Introduction

During a time of war the battlefield is but one of a number of contested spaces. Among the most visible of those secondary battlefields is that public arena where critical rational discourse occurs, particularly the mediated public sphere. The contestants here are the government, especially the military who executes the nation's wartime objectives, and the media, who have a traditional, institutionalized watchdog role in a liberal democracy.

This is an arena where the ability to wield power is largely determinative of the outcome. It's also a space where two culturally constructed sets of normative, professional and institutional standards collide. Rather than combat between armies, relations between the military and the media, particularly in a time of war, result in what is widely referred to as a culture clash. This paper will examine the background and nature of this culture clash as revealed in the experience of the Persian Gulf War, and explore some of the implications of this for a liberal democracy such as is practiced in the United States.

War is an aberration in the normal state of civilized affairs that by its nature is both violent and horrific. The cost is measured primarily in terms of human lives. As an aberration where large numbers of lives are at stake, in the view of those charged with conducting the war, many of the institutional practices of the media must take a secondary role to the primary military objective of prosecuting and winning the war, or at least achieving the political objectives of the war, with the least possible loss of life.

However, since it is the lives of sons, daughters, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives that are at stake, and therefore, the social costs of warfare are paid on an individual basis, the assessment of these costs is too dear to be left solely to the generals and politicians. This means that there is a fundamental need for the populace of a democracy, those who institutionally are the ultimate decision makers, to be kept informed on a sufficient level to make rational decisions. Providing the information necessary to do this is a function that is performed by an independent and often adversarial media. Herein is the heart of an institutional conundrum, for that very process of keeping the citizenry informed unquestionably has the potential to increase the costs in lives if it compromises military operations. Yet, the very cloak of secrecy so crucial to military operations also has the potential to lend itself to poor decisionmaking, and worse, abuse of official power and other institutional misconduct. As Hedrick Smith notes in *The Media and the Gulf War*, perhaps the most comprehensive book examining the relationship between media and the military in the Gulf War,

> War always tests democracy -- its cohesion, its staying power, its sense of purpose. Bloodshed tests not only a people's determination and willingness to sacrifice for a common cause, but the wisdom of national leadership in embarking on bloody combat and its skill in the prosecution of that conflict. War also tests democracy's commitment to its central values of freedom, openness, independent inquiry, dissent, and lusty public debate, all of which undergird the essential ingredient that most distinguishes democracy from dictatorship: the consent of the governed, especially when the issue is a policy of war that asks the ultimate sacrifice of its youth (1992, xiv-xv).

Background

Writing to author Phillip Knightly about covering the Vietnam war, David Halberstam said,

> The problem was trying to cover something every day as news when in fact the real key was that it was all derivative of the French Indo-China war, which is history. So you really should have had a third paragraph in each story which would have said, 'All of this is shit and none of this means anything because we are in the same footsteps as the French and we are prisoners of their experience.' But, given the rule of newspaper reporting you can't do really that. Events have to be judged by themselves, as if the past did not really exist. This is not usually such a problem for a reporter, but to an incredible degree in Vietnam I think we were haunted and indeed imprisoned by the past (1975. 423).

Likewise, military media relations in the Gulf war were imprisoned by the past. Therefore, this section is the "third paragraph" that will examine the history and background factors that made the adversary relationship that emerged from the Gulf conflict largely derivative of a long history

Smith, in describing how war effects democracy, highlighted the key characteristics of the culturally constructed meta-narrative of liberal democracy within which operate sometimes conflicting normative, professional and institutional frameworks. An example of this conflict can be seen in the Brookings Institute's Stephen Hess's attempt to explain why public opinion during, and after, the Gulf war overwhelmingly disregarded media complaints about access restrictions and censorship,

> Freedom of the Press, freedom of information, is an abstraction. Another basic right -- freedom to defend yourself from death -- is not an abstraction ...For most people, the priorities aren't very mysterious: First you win the war, *then* you have a free press (Seelye & Polman. 1991, C4).

As a counterpoint, however, columnist Richard Reeves points out that if journalists stop asking questions because this inquiry might affect the morale of combat troops, "then we've lost it all. The 200 years have been wasted" (Seelye & Polman. 1991, C4).

Delving back more than two centuries to discern the institutional roots of the adversarial role of the media, the late *New York Times* reporter James Reston observed,

> The watchdog role has always been there. All you have to do is go back and read Thomas Paine at the beginning of the Republic. This country had a press before we had a government. ...In general the feeling of reporters is that people with power defend their power, by lies if necessary, and therefore you've got to question them (Hallin. 1986, 5).

In describing the "troubled embrace" of military-media relations, Lt. Gen. Bernard Trainor USMC (retired), placed this tradition in a historic perspective,

> Unquestioned allegiance to government policy died with our involvement in Vietnam. The government lied once too often to the American people and lost their confidence. Today the press does what Thomas Jefferson envisaged for it when he rated it more important than the army as a defender of democratic principles. It keeps a sharp eye on the military and on the government it serves (1990, 11).

In making a broad conceptual case for media independence, Peer and Chestnut drew from a number of contemporary studies. Their analysis succinctly summarizes the normative framework the media rely on as their rationale for the adversarial role they play in their relationship with the government, and in particular, the military. They found that,

> If the public is supplied with accurate, helpful information about public policy and is encouraged to participate in its own political education, there is reason to expect that democracy will flourish. ...However, when information transmitted through the mass media is "affected by various elites, interest groups, and the government itself" the workings of democracy can be "deeply undermined." ...The tradition of a free press, through which contending ideas and policy choices may compete for the public's approval, is restricted by the press' reliance on political elites for information. Paradoxically, the media's effectiveness as vehicles for the popularization of free-flowing political and policy discussion largely depends upon their independence from the very same elite sources on which they rely to get information (1995, 81).

This institutional normative framework has become internalized in the practice of journalism as a professional ideology that has given rise to a set of professional ethics. Crucial to this sense of professional journalistic ethics is the concept of political independence which has become the key to the journalist's self image. This ethic, Hallin explains, contains a strong streak of hostility towards those who wield political power. It arises, according to Hallin,

> in part from the nature of journalism as an occupation. Officials in their efforts to control political appearances, necessarily challenge the autonomy of the media, and journalists naturally resist. As part of the professional socialization process, moreover, the journalist must renounce precisely the goal of political power which the politician pursues (1986, 7).

This leads Hallin to conclude that the most central fact to understanding the politics of the news is understanding the contemporary American journalist's self-image as an autonomous professional. Although this professional ethic of autonomy, and even hostility toward those who wield power, is perhaps the most instructive for examining military-media relations, other professional ethics should also be acknowledged. These include, primarily the values of accuracy, fairness, balance and objectivity. All are universally recognized as part of the professional ethics of contemporary journalism, and, judgments about journalistic practices hinge on adherence to these values.

However, professional ethics and standards aren't, in an of themselves, sufficient to understand journalistic practices. As Morrison and Tumber point out, it would be "sociological madness" to ignore the vital role of structural factors that influence how journalists report. "The journalist," they note, " does not, after all, write for himself, but for an organization" (1988, x). Although the media may be considered as autonomous institutions standing apart from the institutions of state power, the relationship is not quite so clear-cut. This is a point that Hallin illuminates when he describes the news organization of the late twentieth century as a "corporate bureaucracy." Even though news operations are theoretically run by professional journalists without interference from nonjournalists, and submission to political pressures from outside is considered a blot on the organization's honor, this notion of journalists as autonomous professionals is in important ways "a false consciousness." Hallin explains,

> Based on the idea that news judgment can be politically neutral, it not only conceals the process by which news is shaped politically, but is itself part of that process. It is in short a 'myth' -- but in a particular sense of that word. Far from being a mere lie or illusion, it is a deeply held system of consciousness that profoundly affects both the structure of the news organization and the day to day practice of journalism (1986, 23)

There are two primary factors which come into play here, the broad social context in which news judgments are made, and, the political economic factors associated with media institutions. Morrison and Tumber explain that the judgments journalists make take place within professional codes and set standards which are culturally constructed. Working from within their professional set of ethics and standards, Morrison and Tumber note that,

> all we can expect from journalists is a reasonable amount of accuracy and a rounded presentation of the facts. Unfortunately, however, facts are provisional upon wider understandings than that which is observed; but a factual account can be taken to be what a community accepts as reasonably accurate, given the limitations and difficulties of observing events (1988, xi)

Journalists, therefore work within community-structured definitions of what is factual and, as active, thinking human beings who must make judgments, they struggle to decide what constitutes a fact and what counts as an accurate factual account.

The other, and more obvious structural factor influencing journalists is the corporate nature of the vast majority of media institutions, especially in America. Most of the media in America are owned by large corporations. For them, the business of news is about delivering audiences to advertisers, or, as an editor of the *New York Sun,* made abundantly clear: "Journalism consists in buying white paper at two cents a pound and selling it at ten cents a pound" (Bates, 1991, 199).

There are several implications inherent in considering the political economy of media institutions and detailing them all is beyond the limited scope of this paper. However, it is important to note a few points. First, the need to be profitable and provide a return on investments to shareholders determines to a large degree the nature of news. If the items covered are of insufficient interest to attract large enough audiences, or are presented in such a way as to alienate these audiences, then that particular media institution will perish by going out of business. In addition, as businesses behaving consistently with standard, accepted corporate practices, media institutions will, in general, work toward maximizing profits. This means that most major media institutions will work to attract the largest possible audiences while expending just enough resources, but no more than necessary, to accomplish this. The business of news has other more mundane effects on the practice of journalism too. For example, reporters must file stories in order to fill the allotted amount of space. These stories also must be presented in a manner that is sufficiently attractive to audiences too.

There are other factors that relate both to the structural demands of the practice of journalism and to the motivators of individual journalists too. For example the need for timelines is both an institutional motivator (i.e. to be first to break a story), and a personal motivator in the competition between individual journalists to get the story first. In addition, other personal factors bearing on the individual reputations of journalists exert an influence. These can be seen in the quest to get "their" particular story aired or displayed prominently. Adams illustrates the potential implications of this when discussing coverage of the Falkland campaign by citing Journalist Peter Snow's comment that he would protect the security of a military operation unless he thought one of his competitors might publish it first. This, Snow perceived as potentially damaging to his reputation, which by implication, rates higher on his hierarchy of values than erring on the side of caution to avoid any possible loss of life on the part of the military participants (1986, 162). The significance of factors such as these prove highly contentious in determining relative priorities between the military and the media, and in many cases gets at the crux of disagreements stemming from Gulf war coverage.

On the other side of the divide is the military. The history of military mistrust and disdain for journalists is a long one. In the US. it dates back at least to the Civil War. Liz Trotta, writing about the military-media relationship relates the following anecdote,

> One autumn day in 1864, William Tecumseh Sherman, the smoldering ruins of Georgia barely behind him, learned that three reporters traveling with his Army of the Tennessee had been captured by the rebels. The general also heard -- falsely -- that they had been executed.
>
> "Good," he snapped. "Now we'll have news from Hell before breakfast" (1992, 11).

Sherman, reinforcing this opinion, later vowed, "I will never again command an Army in America if we must carry along spies" (Dugan, 1991, A31).

According to Gen Michael Dugan, USAF (retired), who, as Chief of Staff of the Air Force was fired in the early stages of the Gulf War for comments he made to the media (and for whom I was the personal public affairs advisor for a two year period between 1987-1989), such remarks reflect longstanding -- and explainable -- tensions in the relationship between the military and the media. Dugan, who worked as a military affairs expert for one of the networks during the Gulf war, attributes the sources of those tensions to four factors, organic, institutional, cultural and historic.

Organic factors are defined by General Dugan as "information," which he considers fundamental to the nature of both the military and the media. He explains that,

> Military and media organizations struggle with each other because each has a right and a duty to protect and proclaim certain information. Intelligence information and

> information on operations are unquestionably the stuff of military secrets, but they are also the makings for great stories of human endeavor, intrigue and struggle (1991).

This contest over information is behind much of the historic mistrust military commanders have of the media and can be seen in examples dating from General Sherman's reference to journalists as spies, right up to the Gulf war. It is also what lurks behind the comment made by the unnamed America general quoted by Cockerell, Hennessey, and Walker, "I would tell the public nothing about the fighting while it was going on, and when the war was over, I'd tell them we won" (1984, 163).

Institutionally, much has already been discussed concerning the media. However, on the military side, the crux of the issue comes down to media management. This issue centers on the perceived "use" the military has for the media. Writing about Britain, but equally applicable to the US., Cockerell, Hennessey, and Walker observe, "all governments seek to manage the news: to trumpet the good, to suppress the bad and to polish the image of the Prime Minister" (1984, 7). In general, for military purposes, by far the primary "use" for the media is to garner public support for military operations. General Eisenhower's comments to the correspondents gathered to cover the D-Day landings reflect this view,

> I believe that the old saying -- 'public opinion wins wars' -- is true. Our countries fight best when our people are best informed. You will be allowed to report everything possible, consistent, of course, with military security (Smith, 1992, 67)

However, even institutionally, using the media to garner public support is not part of the military's official charter. In the recommendations of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the Military and the Media, commonly referred to as the Sidle Commission, after its chairman, Maj Gen Sidle, USA (retired), the following is one of its official findings:

> This task force does not think it is the mission of the press to mobilize public opinion for war. To the contrary, it is the chief executive who must define the purposes of the nation's use of force and enlist the support of the public and Congress for military action. If an administration's war policy is marked by debate at home, that debate will be reflected in the press, as it was most recently during the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam (Braestrup, 1985, 4).

This same Task Force report also referenced the cultural divide that exists between the military and the media. It noted that military-media relations have never been entirely smooth, in part because of the nature of warfare, but also, because of the "historic differences between the two callings." Elaborating on this, it notes, "now as in the past, each tends to attract different personality types and to foster different values" (9).

General Dugan provides some insight into this aspect of the different personality types,

> Culturally, the military is remote from the mainstream of society, and its members live in a subculture with inherent barriers to external communications. There are different words, different uses for the same words, different living conditions, expectations, self images and more. The differences are neither good, nor bad; they simply exist (1991, A31).

Commenting on the nature of the insularity that has characterized the military culture in the post-Vietnam era, General Trainor explains that the military,

> settled into the relative isolation of self-contained ghettos and lost touch with a changing America. It focused on warlike things and implicitly rejected the amorality of the outside world it was sworn to defend. In an age of selfishness, the professional soldier took pride in his image of his own selflessness. A sense of moral elitism emerged within the armed forces which is apparent today to any civilian who deals with those institutions. The all-volunteer force not only created a highly competent military force, it also created a version of Cromwell's Ironside Army, contemptuous of those with less noble visions. It is no wonder that those who chose the profession of arms looked with suspicion upon those members of the press who pried into their sacred rituals (1990, 5).

In elucidating the cultural differences between the military and the media however, *Washington Post* reporter, and Vietnam veteran, Henry Allen provides some of the most informative insights,

> There is no counterpart in journalism to 'duty, honor, country,' or to the military leader's ultimate responsibility for life and death and the nation's security. The military demands team play. Journalists fight not only with the people they cover, but with each other. The military is hierarchical. Reporters have no rank. The military values loyalty and confidence in superiors. The press values objectivity and skepticism. The military is average guys who take pride in their anonymity. The big-time press is high-achievers struggling for the brief candle that passes for stardom in the media. When the military makes a mistake in combat, its own people die. When the press makes a mistake, it runs a correction (1991, D1).

Many of the different attitudes and values of the military, particularly regarding the media can be traced to General Dugan's fourth point, history. Although the tradition of strains between the military and the media is a long one, the formative period that informs the present is unquestionably the Vietnam war. Hedrick Smith notes that the

> communal antagonisms run in a straight line from Vietnam to the Gulf. In Vietnam, it was the military that felt the press had unfairly maligned those in uniform and undermined the conduct of the war by showing its negative side and turning public opinion against the war (1992, xv).

It goes much deeper than that though. Vietnam proved to be the formative period for the crop of senior officers who conducted the Gulf War. Their influence and attitudes to a large extent colored the opinions toward the media of their subordinates. Liz Trotta, a former NBC and CBS News correspondent who covered both the Vietnam war and Grenada invasion, and who writes and speaks extensively on military-media relations, noted recently that relations between the military and the media at the time of the Gulf War may have been at their lowest point in the history of the Republic. She attributes much of this to the legacy of Vietnam:

> The front ranks of American journalism are thick with those who got their first break covering Vietnam, righteously deciding that victory wasn't worth dying for -- and, anyway, the fall of Goliath was a far better story. During the Tet offensive of 1968, for example, the televised pictures of Viet Cong on the embassy lawn never caught up with reality -- that the enemy was severely punished and dispersed, a fact even Hanoi's commanders would admit years later.
>
> Despite the earnest disclaimers of Defense Department spin artists and "enlightened" field commanders, the breach remains unrepaired. Military men cannot forget those humiliations and, despite revisionist assertions that the reporting from Southeast Asia had negligible effect on public opinion, they still taste the gall. They provided access and got a bonus set of battle scars for their trouble. Such memories have become legacy. Ask any cadet at West Point, or raw recruit what he thinks of newspeople (1992, 11-12).

As a result, Trotta observes that the Vietnam experience has left many military leaders with the conviction to never again let the press lose a war.

General Trainor too, cites Vietnam as the formative influence on current military-media relations. He notes that the legacy lingers even though the majority of today's career officers have had no such experiences with the media . He points out that most of today's officers were children during the Vietnam war, and today's academy cadets, whom he claims are some of the most vehement in their criticism of the media, were "in diapers" when Saigon fell. Nonetheless, referring to senior military leaders, career officers, and even cadets, he observes,

> all of them suffer this institutional form of post-traumatic shock syndrome. It is a legacy of the war, and it takes root soon after they enter the service. Like racism, anti-Semitism, and all forms of bigotry, it is irrational but nonetheless real. The credo of the military seems to have become "duty, honor, country, and hate the media." (1990, 2).

While the Vietnam experience may stand out as the ultimate low point to date for today's military, many have termed it the "golden age" for the media. This too, is part of a legacy that exasperated the gap between the military and the media during the time of the Gulf war. Allen points out that following Vietnam and Watergate, things changed for the media in the 1970's. He elaborates on some of the effects of this,

> Suddenly, the media had prestige. Instead of drawing their staffs from high-school graduates, failed novelists, and the occasional aristocrat looking to get his hands smudged, big-time media were getting resumes from people who had grown-up in the class segregation of upscale suburbs, day-school products who had never been in places where you don't let your mouth write checks that your butt can't cash, had never been yelled at with the professional finesse of a drill sergeant, a construction boss, or a shop teacher. The most important experience in their life had been college. During summers they had internships, not jobs. A lot more of them were women. After the draft ended, virtually none of them even knew anyone who had been in the military, much less served themselves (1991, D1).

Following the Vietnam experience the media basked in the glow of its new-found prestige. Journalism schools proliferated and journalism courses overflowed with eager young Woodward and Bernstein hopefuls. As with much of American society, with the end of the draft along with the war in Southeast Asia, the military rapidly faded from journalists' field of interest. Progressively fewer had any military service and covering military affairs provoked, if not outright hostility, then a high degree of indifference. The military too, went back to school and drew its own lessons from this experience. One thing that emerged from this soul-searching was that the rules of engagement for dealings between the military and the media were drastically changed.

The Clash

Highlighting the results of over a decade of media indifference toward the military, and how dramatically the military approach to dealing with the media had changed from the time of the Vietnam war to the Gulf war, the *Washington Post's* Allen, painted this portrait of the two parties at the press briefings conducted in Riyadh:

> The Persian Gulf press briefings are making reporters look like fools, nit-pickers, and egomaniacs; like dilettantes who have spent exactly none of their lives on the end of a gun or even a shovel; dinner party commandos, slouching inquisitors, collegiate spitball artists; people who have never been in a fistfight much less combat; a whining self-righteous, upper-middle-class mob jostling for whatever tiny flakes of fame may settle on their shoulders like some sort of Pulitzer Prize dandruff.
>
> They ask the same questions over and over. In their frustration, they ask questions that no one can answer; that anyone can answer; that no one should answer if they could answer. They complain about getting no answers, they complain about the answers they get. They are angry that the military won't let them go anywhere, the way they could in Vietnam. They talk about war as if it were a matter of feelings to be hashed out with a psychotherapist, or a matter of ethics to be discussed in a philosophy seminar. A lot of them seem to care more about Iraqi deaths than American deaths.

> They don't seem to understand that war is real. They don't seem to understand the military either. Meanwhile the military has their number, perfectly. Media and military cultures are clashing, the media are getting hurt, and it's all happening live from Riyadh and the Pentagon. It is a silly spectacle.

By contrast,

> In the Persian Gulf briefings, the military briefers adopt the Reagan/Ali style, taking punch after punch, looking humble, cocking their heads, being polite, and playing the tarbaby. They don't let the reporters get to them. They confess errors -- deaths by friendly fire, bombs that missed. Like the Viet Cong, they only fight when they know they'll win. They come on like the silent majority in desert fatigues, while the reporters come on like Ivy League Puritans, pointing bony fingers and working themselves into rages (1991, D1).

Although Allen's point is not to bash the media, or praise the military, but, rather to describe the messy nature of journalistic inquiry involved in producing the news, he does highlight several issues that formed the crux of the military media conflict during the Gulf War. First and foremost among these were the closely related issues of access and censorship.

The battle over access was largely a one-sided affair. As Walter Goodman of the *New York Times* observed, "The Pentagon won ground superiority over the press before it achieved air superiority over the Iraqi's" (in Smith, 1992, 231). The military plan for dealing with media in the Gulf war owed much to its recent experiences in Grenada, where media were excluded for the first three days, and Panama, where access to combat was severely restricted. In both cases the military enjoyed widespread public support for their activities despite vociferous complaints by the media about restrictions to access. Nonetheless, responding to media concerns, the military and media worked out arrangements to get at least a minimum number of journalists access early in any future military operation. The heart of this was the much maligned pool system.

The pool, according to Pete Williams, the assistant secretary of defense for public affairs during the Gulf war, was not only the primary, but also a very effective means of assuring access for reporters. He explains that within a few days of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, US air forces arrived in Saudi Arabia. At that time there were no Western reporters in that country. Then, according to Williams, while the Saudi government studied whether to grant visas to journalists, at the insistence of the US military, they agreed to accept a pool of US reporters if the US military could get them in. So the DOD National Media Pool was activated because there was no other way to get Western reporters into Saudi Arabia.

Williams explains that as the numbers of troops in the desert grew, so did the numbers of reporters. The press corps in Saudi Arabia went from zero on August 2, to 17 with the arrival of the first pool on August 13, to 800 by December, and to nearly 1400 just before the ground war began. This number was more than three-and-a half times the total number of correspondents accredited during the height of the Vietnam war. As an example of the extra effort DOD made to provide access to reporters, on the morning after the start of the air campaign, in response to the media's concern that they couldn't get enough reporters into the country because of Saudi visa processing and commercial aircraft restrictions, the US Air Force furnished a C-141 cargo plane to transport 126 journalists to the desert.

Most of the reporters who came to Saudi Arabia wanted to be out with combat units when the action started. Williams explains that the sheer numbers, and the transportation constraints of getting reporters out to fast-moving mobile troops in a vast and often unmarked desert made it so they had virtually no choice but to use pools. He acknowledges that pools rub reporters the wrong way,

> but there was simply no other way for us to open up a rapidly moving front to reporters roaming the battlefield. We believe the pool system did three things: it got reporters out to see the action, it guaranteed that Americans at home got reports from the scene of the action and it allowed the military to accommodate a reasonable number of journalists without overwhelming the units that were fighting the enemy (1991, 8).

Despite the benefits that Pete Williams described, and as he alluded, there was widespread dissatisfaction among the media with the pool system. An account by John Fialka, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter who was a member of a pool is helpful in illuminating some of the problems:

> We were not just going to write history; we were about to make history. Only 27 reporters had been allowed to land on the Normandy beaches with Allied troops on June 6, 1944. It is estimated that no more than 70 reporters were ever at the front at any one time during the Korean War. Of the 400 reporters accredited during the height of the Vietnam War, only between 30 and 40 could be found with combat units on a given day. When we reached the desert, however, there would be 159 journalists [out in the field] covering US [combat] units in the Gulf War, more than twice the combat coverage of any previous modern war. Was this a rosy moment in military-media relations? Hardly. We were an indigestible lump being fed into a military press-handling system that was woefully short of resources and on the verge of collapse. The Pentagon had insisted that in this war reporters must be accompanied by military escorts, but it had not provided enough seasoned public affairs escorts and vehicles to do the job (1992, 4-5).

Fialka was assigned to a pool covering an Army unit, and as with many others who also accompanied the Army, he experienced difficulties and delays in being able to transmit and file his stories. As he notes in his book, *Hotel Warrior*, the pool experience was very different for reporters assigned with other branches of the service, particularly the Marines, who often drew rave reviews from the pool reporters assigned with them.

As Fialka mentioned, one of the strictures of pool coverage was that reporters were required to accept military escorts. Pete Williams, observed that,

> In World War II, the most disappointing thing a reporter could hear was probably , "I'm sorry. The channel is fogged in. We can't leave here for days." In Vietnam, it was probably, "Sorry, but the last helicopter left here an hour ago." In Operation Desert Storm, it was probably, "Hi, I'm your press escort, and I'm here to help" (1991, 2).

This prohibition against reporters traveling without an escort , according to Larry Grossman, a journalist who covered the war, caused many news organizations to "cry foul." He notes that,

> In effect, reporters conducted most of their interviews with Big Brother -- the public affairs officer -- watching. This, of course, may well have discouraged GI's from speaking candidly (1991, 27).

Direct censorship, however, was an entirely different matter. What is often referred to as censorship by those critical of the military's dealings with the media in the Gulf war, to a large extent, stems from the ground rules journalists had to agree to be accredited in the war zone (without accreditation, journalists could be forcibly removed). As Pete Williams explains, in formulating the ground rules for coverage in the Gulf war, the ground rules for World War II, Korea and Vietnam were carefully studied. Those that resulted were not intended to prevent journalists from reporting on incidents that might embarrass the military or to make military operations look sanitized. Instead, they were intended "simply and solely to prevent publication of details that could jeopardize a military operation or endanger the lives of US troops" (1991, 5). To achieve this, the ground rules prohibited journalists from reporting the following:

- Details of future operations
- Specific information about troop strengths or locations
- Specific information on missing or downed airplanes or ships while search and rescue operations are underway
- Information on operational weaknesses that could be used against US forces

Williams observed that, in general, reporters understood the reasoning behind these ground rules, and "of all the aspects of the coverage plan for the war in the Persian Gulf, these off-limits topics were the least controversial" (1991, 6).

The policy concerning copy review was an entirely different matter, however. In World War II reporters wrote stories and submitted them to military censors who physically cut-out any copy they felt broke the rules before sending the stories on to the media organizations. The decision of the censors was final.

No such system of censorship was used during the Gulf war. Instead, a system existed whereby the military could appeal to news organizations when they thought material in their stories would violate the ground rules. Unlike censorship, Williams explains, the system in the Gulf left the final decision to publish or broadcast in the hands of the journalist, not the military. Only the pool stories, from reporters in the field, were subject to this review, not, according to Williams, "live television and radio reports or the thousands of other stories written in Dharan and Riyadh, based on pool reports, military briefings and original reporting." Most often, reviews were done in the field, and in the case of print media, even on the computer screen. For most reporters, according to Grossman, "the process was little more than a nuisance" (1991, 30).

Of the 1351 print pool reports written while the pools were in existence, only five, or 0.03 percent, were submitted for DOD review in Washington, and of those, according to Williams, four were quickly cleared, and the fifth, which dealt in-depth with intelligence operations in the field, was changed by agreement with the editor-in-chief (1991, 6).

Even Williams concedes that some mistakes however, were made during the review process. There were also some delays in journalists being able to file their stories, although most of these delays he attributes more to logistical problems associated with field conditions in remote locations, rather than the review process. Still, most journalists and scholars agree that direct censorship was not a significant problem in the Gulf war. Philip Taylor from Britain's Institute of Communications Studies observed,

> Mostly, it appears, censorship of *news* was confined largely to matters of operational security. Censorship of *views* was comparatively rare, being confined largely to religious matters [by the Saudis]. But then, given that most of the media supported the conflict, there was very little need to censor views. Nonetheless, even the unilaterilists were able to get their slightly more skeptical and critical copy out of the region, although the coalition possessed the means to prevent it if it had so wished. Censorship of opinions was, of course, much more difficult to implement anyway; there was nothing to stop a critical editor back home from writing a hostile piece (1992, 16).

John Fialka also notes that direct military censorship was not a significant issue. He writes that, military censorship, in the literal sense of the word was not the problem. However, Fialka quotes

Walter Porges, ABC network vice-president as saying, "I guess you could call it censorship by lack of access" (1992, 6).

Despite any form of direct censorship, or even DoD review of reports not generated by pool journalists in the field, many in the media gave the impression that their reporting was subject to both constant and direct censorship. CNN, for example ran a caption on its broadcasts saying "cleared by US military censors." US Air Force Colonel Mike Gallagher, who was one of the directors of media relations at the Joint Information Bureau in Riyadh, said in a telephone interview, that he questioned CNN about why they were running the disclaimer when, in fact, their coverage was subject to no review unless it came from a pool reporter in the field. CNN's response according to Colonel Gallagher, was that since they didn't know what footage was being reviewed, but knew that some of it could be subject to review, they felt compelled to run the disclaimer.

The mistakes made during the military review process are very well documented and widely reported. However, they do not appear to have been widespread, as is evidenced by the fact that it is the exact same handful of incidents that are constantly repeated, to the point of assuming a folklorish quality, among those in the media criticizing military control of information.

Despite this, there was a persistent feeling, particularly among middle and upper level media managers in the US that military interference had infringed upon their journalistic privileges and rights. As a result, at the conclusion of the war, fifteen senior news media figures, including representatives from all three networks and CNN, as well as several of the leading daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines sent a letter to the Secretary of Defense in which they said,

> The pool system was used in the Persian Gulf War not to facilitate news coverage but to control it. We are deeply concerned about our right to produce timely, independent reporting of Americans at war. We are apprehensive that, because this war was so successfully prosecuted on the battlefield, the virtual control that your department exercised over the American press will become a model for the future.
>
> Our organizations are committed to the proposition that this should not be allowed to happen again. We are seeking a course to preserve the acknowledged need for real security without discarding the role of independent journalism that is also vital for our democracy.
>
> We are intent upon not experiencing again the Desert Storm kind of pool system. In fact, there are many who believe no pool system should be agreed to in the future. We cannot accept the limitations on access or the use of monitors to chill reporting. Nor do we want

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> a repeat of the disaster that resulted from unacceptable delays in the transmission of our stories and pictures because of security review requirements (Smith, 1992, 379).

These demands surface several contentious issues regarding military media relations in a time of war that need to be examined. For one thing, pools serve a vital purpose for both the military and journalists. As *The Economist* noted, in defense of pools,

> The Pentagon and British MOD have corralled reporters into official groups subject to strict rules of security. No sensible editor should oppose that; journalist swarming around on their own are as likely to be shot by their own side as by the other (Taylor, 1992, 8).

John Fialka, despite his dissatisfaction with his personal pool arrangement offered this observation,

> It is difficult for many of us who witnessed the swift-moving nature of this war and experienced the chaos on the battlefield to see how it could have been covered without some sort of pool mechanism that guaranteed access to commanders, their units and their communications systems (1992, 60).

Those who were most critical of the pool system, according to Fialka, were the Washington bureau chiefs and those who covered the war from hotels in Riyadh. He quotes Stan Cloud, *Time* magazine's Washington bureau chief as saying,

> To those who argue that if the DoD pool is dismantled we might miss some major news event, I reply that we missed major news events when we were in the pool -- namely, important parts of the Persian Gulf reflagging operation, the invasion of Panama, and most of the Gulf war (1992, 60).

Andrew Glass, Washington bureau chief for Cox Newspapers, and, someone whom Fialka points out spent most of the Gulf war covering press briefings from the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Riyadh, went so far as to suggest,

> I think from what I know of it that when the ground war began, it would have been perfectly reasonable for groups of reporters in four-wheel-drive vehicles, assuming they had communications, to cover the war with no difficulty at all. Of course they would have to exercise self-censorship (1992, 60).

This attitude, popular among a number of journalists, illustrates some significant differences in the relationship between the military and media concerning combat coverage. In response to the hundreds of journalists who espouse the "drive-up theory" of covering future wars, Marine Corp General Boomer, whom John Fialka termed "the war's most astute handler of the media," responded,

> That's bullshit. You cannot have people wandering around on the battlefield on their own. It's not fair to the soldiers. You can say, 'well we'll take care of our own,' but you can't. The Marines will wind up having to provide protection and in combat we don't have time to do that (1992, 60-61).

Pete Williams also provides some insight into the implications for the government of the "drive-up" approach to combat coverage:

> Several bureau chiefs told me last fall that in planning for war coverage, the security of reporters was their concern, not mine. But that's not realistic, because I couldn't ignore that even if I wanted to. It's not morally possible. We were on the phone to CBS News nearly every day that Bob Simon and his crew were missing. ...And when a group of US journalists was captured in Iraq after the cease-fire, four news industry executives wrote to the President saying that *no* US forces should withdraw from Iraq until the issue of the journalists was resolved. The issue was raised by the US government with the Iraqi representatives in Washington, with Iraq's ambassador to the UN, with Soviet officials, with the International Red Cross, and at two meetings between US and Iraqi military officers in the Gulf. ...We must drop the pretense that the safety of journalists isn't the government's concern (1991, 9).

General Boomer pointed out another problem, one associated with advanced communication technology, that has the potential for considerable implications in future battles if reporters are allowed unrestricted access to battlefields. For example, hand-held satellite telephones are rapidly becoming a reality. This provides the possibility for instantaneous coverage of the battlefield. As General Boomer explains, "we worry about the enemy seeing in real time what we're doing. Say you had 12 uplinks running around on the battlefield. The enemy would pick up live pictures" allowing them to know just what they're up against (Fialka, 1992, 62). Rather than even perceiving this as a threat to security, some in the media, such as Walter Porges, ABC vice-president for news practices, think that if an enemy saw what they were up against in real time on a battlefield they might be reluctant to engage in battle (Fialka, 1992, 62). Porges, does not, however, address what the possible implications, or costs in lives, might be if the enemy, through real time transmissions, discovers something they can exploit to their advantage in the battle.

This gets to another point that General Boomer raised, that in a sense, goes straight to the heart of the battlefield self-censorship issue, media ignorance of military issues. General Boomer insists that reporters who reach the field should have some experience in covering military affairs. He observed, "it shouldn't be amateur night at the follies as far as combat correspondents are concerned" (1992, 61). The media's indifference and neglect toward developing expertise in military affairs following the Vietnam conflict led to a deep and pervasive ignorance that was readily apparent during the Gulf war. Peter Braestrup, author of the *Twentieth-Century Task Force Report on Military Media Relations,* and who covered Vietnam for the *New York Times,* was Saigon Bureau Chief for the *Washington Post*, and is currently director of communications and senior editor at the Library of Congress, offered the following observations in the *Columbia Journalism Review* about his fellow correspondents covering the Gulf war,

> We're in a period of culture shock. A new generation of journalists is learning about war and they're learning about the military. They're all bright enough, they're all energetic enough, but this is like landing on Mars. Their use of military terminology is always wrong: they don't know the difference between a brigade and a battalion, between a machine gun and an automatic rifle.
>
> We've had five-and-half months to get people out there and to learn it, but a lot of them just didn't. They're ahistorical; they can't remember any precedents for anything. They keep discovering the world anew. They either concentrate on high-tech stories or on what an ABC producer described as "boo-hoo journalism," that is, asking, How do you feel? not What do you know? They're looking for that little emotional spurt. They don't know what the wider vignette means. They're yuppies in the desert (Smith, 1992, 234-235).

Braestrup drove the significance of this point home in his forward to John Fialka's *Hotel Warrior*,

> Some editors contend that a good reporter can cover anything, but they do not send people to cover the Super Bowl who know nothing of the game. If, as some critics were later to claim, journalists were bamboozled by the military, many were as much victims of ignorance and their own short attention spans as of manipulation (1992, xiii).

Considering the widespread media outcry for greater independence and self- censorship, the question must be raised as to how, in the face of the profound ignorance repeatedly demonstrated by vast numbers in the media during the Gulf war, any reasonable military commander could risk the lives of their troops to the judgments of reporters concerning the battlefield implications of their stories -- particularly considering the technological imperative of real-time reporting.

Emerging from the coverage of the Gulf war, there were, in fact a number of actual instances where the ignorance of reporters posed a significant threat to the lives of the combat forces there. For example, Colonel Gallagher reported that when Scud missiles started falling on Riyadh, media crews reporting live from the roof of the hotel were broadcasting the impact locations. For the Iraqi's this is equivalent to having a forward artillery observer provide impact locations in order to allow them to adjust their launchers for greater accuracy. In another example, when the air war began, reporters again broadcasting live from the roof of the hotel gave departure information on military aircraft as they took-off on missions. Any competent intelligence official or Air Force officer with an operational background could have a reasonably accurate idea, based on take-off times, aircraft type, and armament visible on the aircraft, where it was going and when it would be likely to arrive. In fact, that is what happened, with the result that anti-aircraft weapons were ready when the aircraft arrived. In another instance, a print reporter was filing a story with clear, precise information on the movement of forces west to make the "Hail Mary Pass" maneuver that proved decisive, partly because of its complete surprise to the Iraqi's.

In all cases, when journalists were informed of the implications of their reporting, they cooperated readily. However, in just these few instances, personally experienced by just one officer, it is apparent that if the military relied solely on media self-censorship, the cost in lives could have been considerable.

There is, however, another, and perhaps more insidious trend among a growing number of journalists that calls into question the judgment they'd exercise in self-censorship. This trend is the metastasizing of the professional journalistic ethic of objectivity into a malignant form of "neutrality" that surfaced prominently during the Gulf war. This form of "neutrality" is neither objective, balanced, nor truly neutral, and it does not well serve the public who empowers the media. In an article for the *Wall Street Journal,* reporter Dorothy Rabinowitz noted that CNN's Bernard Shaw stated "categorically that a journalist must remain neutral" (1992, 358). Even if this were dismissed in political economic terms as CNN's global needs dictating that they not offend anyone, it does not negate the implications regarding the judgment that might be exercised in issues of self-censorship. Shaw's perspective is shared by a number of prominent journalists too. For example, John Corry, writing in *Commentary*, noted that at a conference on the military and the press hosted by Columbia University, CBS reporter Mike Wallace was asked if a "higher duty as an American citizen did not take precedence over his professional concerns as a journalist. "No," Wallace replied, "you don't have that higher duty --no, no." When Wallace's CBS colleague Dan Rather was reporting from Saudi Arabia, he referred to "our" tanks." According to Corry, *The Washington Post* gave him a call asking if it wasn't, "a bit jingoistic, perhaps xenophobic, to say 'our' tanks?" Rather apologized and promised he would never say such a thing again (1992, 362).

This is something, Rabinowitz notes, that the role models for many contemporary war correspondents would never have done:

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> In World War II the view of reporters as independent operators above the fray of battle was not the sort of thing reporters of Edward R. Murrow's era were used to. Murrow, one of the earliest, most potent of the Germans' wartime enemies took sides. It is as difficult to imagine his younger colleague Eric Severeid espousing the view that in covering war his first allegiance was to the principles of journalism (Smith, 1992, 358).

CNN's Peter Arnett is even more emphatic. In a broadcast from Baghdad he said, "I don't work for the national interest, I work for the public interest" (Corry, 1992, 364). Corry highlights a significant flaw in the neutrality stance inherent in Arnett's distinction between the national interest and the public interest. He explains,

> It may be here that neutral journalism flies apart and breaks up into shards. What is this public interest, and who determines it, anyway? The national interest is determined by consensus and people are elected to serve it. The recent consensus was that the US national interest lay in driving Iraq out of Kuwait and decimating its war machine. But the public interest is amorphous and usually it turns out to be closer to the interest of its advocates than the rest of the public (1992, 364).

This raises a significant issue that goes to the heart of how journalists come to be on battlefields in the first place and how they merit the public expense in terms of the logistical support, time and inconvenience that their presence creates, as well as the privileged access they are afforded. They are there because of both culturally constructed civic and normative frameworks that envision a particular role for them. These culturally constructed frameworks are the manifestation of a national interest. If reporters disavow any responsibilities to the very normative frameworks that empower them and their very profession in a liberal democracy, in the name of what they label a broader "professional" ethic, then do they not also disavow any right to the privileges and access afforded by those same normative frameworks? The implications are significant. Within the institutional framework of a liberal democracy "neutral," or for that matter, even overtly hostile journalists have a right to report on military combat. However, even considering the almost universal concern that journalists voice about not revealing information that could cost lives, could it be construed as responsible, or even ethical, for a military leader responsible for the lives of a nation's sons and daughters to even consider delegating censorship decisions, when sensitive security information on a battlefield can have serious life-and-death consequences, to the judgment of anyone who disavows any responsibility to the very national interest which sent the military to the battlefield in the first place?

Even granted that the presence of journalists with no allegiance to the national interest should be allowed on the battlefield, although perhaps without self-censorship authority, the neutrality approach still compromises the very journalistic principles within which it's wrapped, and it still compromises the service journalists provide the public who ultimately empowers them. Stephen Aubin, in analyzing the coverage of the Gulf War, observed, " If US reporters deserve the public's ire for anything, it is their pathetic failure to provide context when conveying information from both sides." Noting the difference in the control exercised over information between the US and the Iraqi's, Aubin explained,

> Even the US government's efforts at 'spin control' are a far cry from the totalitarian control of society through a secret police apparatus [Iraq's] that makes the KGB look amateurish. US reporters can permeate their [own] government, and, in the end, they can write what they want (1992, 360).

However, this distinction, according to Aubin, is not made by the "neutrals," whose reporting left the public with the impressions that the degree of control over information was roughly similar. "Why," Aubin asks, "not paint the truth in vivid terms?"

> For instance, a reporter could say, 'Baghdad Radio, the mouthpiece of Saddam Hussein's government, reported today that ...' Television reporters could also add context to video coming out of Baghdad. Instead of flashing "cleared by the Iraqi government," why not point out that the reason reporters stationed in Iraq had to travel so far for so few casualties is that the allies are taking pains to avoid such casualties. In the case of the US bombing of an Iraqi bunker, journalists have not accepted the basic distinction that Saddam Hussein's targets were civilians while the US targets were military, in which unfortunately civilians may have died. ...By being there and insisting on Western standards of neutrality -- not objectivity -- they've set themselves up for use in war propaganda (1992, 360).

The concern over neutrality was clearly not shared by the public for whom the media covered the war. Nor, is there any evidence of widespread public dissatisfaction with government restrictions on access or the review of information provided to the media. In fact, public support of the war effort was overwhelming, as was a certain disdain for the media's complaints. This led John Balzar, a correspondent covering the Gulf war, to observe, "I was a sergeant in Vietnam and now I am a journalist here. In both wars, I feel like I'm in the wrong place at the wrong time, and I am going to go home and have people throw rocks at me" (Allen, 1991, D1).

Two weeks into the war 57 percent of the people polled believed that the military should impose tighter restrictions on war coverage. In addition, 60 percent of the 55,000 phone calls, faxes, and letters CNN received about its Gulf coverage were negative. A Times-Mirror survey in mid-March 1991 concluded that there had been a fundamental shift in how Americans feel about censorship. Whereas the public in the mid-1980's was either evenly divided on the issue, or came down clearly on the side of the media, the Times-Mirror survey found that a two-to-one majority agreed with the statement "military censorship is more important than the media's ability to report important news (Gottschalk, 1992, 470).

Shortly after the air war began in January of 1991, an earlier poll taken by the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press revealed that seventy-eight percent of the people surveyed said the military was not hiding bad news and was telling the public as much as it could under the circumstances. Seventy-nine percent approved of the Pentagon's restrictions, and fifty-seven percent favored even stricter rules (Grossman, 1991, 31). After the war eight in ten Americans rated media coverage of the war as good or excellent and favorable opinion of the military increased by over sixty percent (Patterson, 1995, 21).

However, Gottschalk cautions against putting too much stock in the polls, noting that public opinion tends to respond to certain situational variables. She explains that measuring media effectiveness by the standard of public approval poses certain problems,

> This is an exceedingly dangerous standard to internalize, especially at a time when there is a pervasive and deepening anti-press sentiment in the United States. Public dislike of the press becomes especially intense during quick, patriotic overseas adventures like those in Panama, Grenada, and the Gulf. During a popular war, Americans don't like to see their Generals grilled. The Pentagon used this fact to its advantage during the Gulf war, presenting elaborately rehearsed briefings on prime time that were extremely popular with the public. The sheer length and frequency of the briefings made the Pentagon seem candid. By contrast, journalists appeared to be an ornery, malcontent lot, never satisfied with how much the Pentagon was revealing (1992, 470).

The effect of polls reflecting a high degree of public support for the war and the military had a decisive effect on media performance according to Gottschalk. Taking a critical stance toward media performance during the war, particularly for adopting a "cheerleading approach," she claims that an obsession with the polls led to an abdication by the media in fulfilling its adversarial role:

> Flattering, cajoling, and generally pleasing the public have replaced keeping the public informed and engaged in the political process as primary goals of the news business. So, when journalists and owners attempted to assess the media's performance in the Gulf, they did not look to studies that measured how well-informed Americans were about critical issues and questions. Instead, they looked to polls that measured what the public though of the press (1992, 470).

David Morrison provides some insights in how the results of polls are informative of the relationship that exists between public perceptions and media coverage of the Gulf war. In writing about the results of a study he conducted in Britain in *Television and the Gulf War,*

(1992) Morrison noted that in order to judge the performance of any media, it is necessary to know two basic things, the values people hold toward the issues being reported, and the expectations they have of media performance. In his study, he found that the British public had high expectations of the performance of television news. However, the values they held toward the Gulf war effort took precedence. The public understood that news was a human construction, and that, as such, it might be biased, but not dangerously so. They also expected accuracy and truth. Nonetheless, during the actual conduct of the war, they were willing to subordinate these expectations as long as after the fighting ended, the truth came out.

The relationship between the media and their audience however, changed dramatically in the Gulf war, and a primary factor in altering this relationship was the advances made in communications technology. As Philip Taylor observed,

> Above all, perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from the Gulf war is the need to redefine the relationship between the media and their audience. When the authorities can speak directly to the audience via live television, rather than indirectly via the interpretations with which journalists have traditionally informed their readers and viewers of what was going on, the gap between government and governed is narrowed substantially (1992, 18)

This observation left Taylor asking, what role is left for the media. As he elaborates,

> In the eighteenth century, the press emerged as an agent of liberty, defining a role for itself as the keeper of the public conscience. But when the public and the government are one, as they were in the Gulf war, what role should the media adopt? (1992, 18)

As Gottschalk observed, "the very definition of news was rewritten -- from something that has happened, to something that is happening at the moment you are hearing of it" (1992, 472). She notes that along with journalists' desires to please the public, stemming from an overemphasis on their economic interests, they have also internalized another "equally dangerous standard -- a compulsion to directly transmit an event as it is happening." This new definition of news, she explains was made possible by revolutionary improvements in technology. As Gottshchalk elaborates,

> The journalists who covered the Gulf war had equipment that was light years ahead of anything used in Vietnam -- costly satellite uplinks that can fit into a good-sized suitcase, laptop computers, satellite telephones, fax machines, and infrared cameras. This technology , however, was employed primarily to transport the viewer to the big event, not to increase the viewer's understanding of the big picture (1992, 472).

The problem with this is that it abrogates what have been some of the primary functions journalists have fulfilled such as selection, interpretation and perspective. It is through these skills that a medium earns civic responsibility and achieves public trust. No matter how advanced the communications technology, it's focus is to some extent always limited. Good journalists have, in the past, ensured that the selective focus of the medium was directed at that which was significant. Then, the journalist interpreted the event and put it in perspective.

How significant these changes were during the Gulf war is still an open question. Regarding overall reporting of that conflict, DOD's Pete Williams declared shortly following the war that the American people got the best war coverage in history. Some have noted that the public may have gotten the coverage it wanted, but question whether it got the coverage it needed. Gottschalk, who is severely critical of both the media's lack of opposition, and the public's support of the war, concludes that American society got the press it deserved (1992, 473).

Conclusion

An editorial that appeared in *The Economist* shortly after the war provides some perspective on the compromises that are required in the unique arena of combat reporting. After making the case that restrictions on wartime coverage are sometimes required, the article explained that the other side of this issue is that,

> The citizens of a democracy do have a right to know what war is like, and whether its horrors are worse than the alternative. A dutiful press is to tell the truth, about right and wrong alike. Such reports can force improvements and save lives. ... The apparent contradiction in those views [that there must be restrictions *and* free and independent reporting] disappears in the face of one simple fact. War is an aberration. While it lasts, the practice of democracy is obscured, just as the view of the battle is restricted from any one part of the field. Editors should, by all means, stake their claim to fair reporting, but not get too upset if the answer comes slowly (Taylor, 1992, 8).

The fact may well be that war is an aberration, but, it is important to keep in mind that military action has proven, over the past few decades, to be a not altogether uncommon aberration. For example, during the 1970's, the US spent half the decade fighting in Vietnam, fought a brief skirmish during the Mayaguez incident, put its nuclear forces on alert, during the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict, and ended the decade with its embassy personnel held hostage in Iran. The 1980's opened with both the debacle at "Desert One," and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The next ten years saw one of the largest military build-ups since the end of World War II, US forces in Lebanon (ending with the suicide bombing of a Marine barracks), Grenada, covert support of the Nicaraguan "Contras," limited involvement in El Salvador's civil war, the raid on Libya, and the invasion of Panama. The 1990's dawned with the Gulf war, then forces were deployed into action in Somalia, and today there is a significant contingent in Bosnia. Considering how frequent these "aberrations" are, achieving a better understanding of the relationship between the military and the media in a time of war is crucial.

Examining the military-media relationship in the Gulf war makes a few facts clear. For one, there is unquestionably a legitimate role for free and independent media in the theater of military operations and on the battlefield. Peter Braestrup sums up these functions of the media nicely,

> It serves as eyewitness; it forges a bond between the citizen and the soldier and, at its best, it strives to avoid manipulation either by officials, or by critics of the government through accurate independent reporting. It also provides one of the checks and balances that sustains the confidence of the American people in their political system and the armed forces (1992, xiv).

However, the relationship between the media and the military, since it is part of a system of checks and balances, is always likely to be a contentious one. It is, in fact inherent in the institutional role of the media, and in both the culture, and legitimate security requirements of the military. As General Trainor notes,

> The press is a watchdog over institutions of power, be they military, political, economic or social. Its job is to inform the people about the doings of their institutions. By its very nature, the press is skeptical and intrusive. As a result there will always be a divergence of interests between the media and the military. That they are both essential to the well-being of our nation is beyond question, but the problem of minimizing the natural friction between the two is a daunting one (1990, 3).

The media then, within only the most essential security constraints, have a legitimate right to independent reporting when America's sons and daughters are ordered into harm's way. But, they owe it to the public who empowers them to report from a reasonably informed perspective. In addition, the media also have a fundamental obligation to select and interpret what they report. This too, however, they must do from a knowledgeable and balanced perspective. Institutionally, the media's role in a democracy is as a watch dog -- not a lap dog -- but equally, not an attack dog. What makes the determining difference is knowledge, and one of the most significant conclusions to come from of studying the media's performance in the Gulf war, as well as their relationship with the military, is that in many regards this was their most serious deficiency.

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Submission to:
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THE PRIVATE LINE

How Theodore Vail of AT&T Invoked the Concept of "Public Interest" to Enhance the Company's Position as a Monopoly

Kerry Anderson Crooks, M.Ed., APRP
Graduate Division, 2038 Weimer Hall
College of Journalism and Communications
The University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida 32611
Tel: (352) 392-1686/(352) 378-1770
Fax: (352) 392-3952
E-mail: KCrooks@nervm.nerdc.ufl.edu

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> "From this country's beginning, there has been an abiding and widespread fear of the evils that flow from monopoly - that is, concentration of economic power in the hands of a few."
> *Justice Hugo Black in U.S. v. Von's Grocery Co., 384 U.S. 270 (1966)*

> "In telegraphy and telephony, regulatory policy meant acceptance of monopoly."
> *Robert Horwitz, The Irony of Regulatory Reform, p 104*

Overview

In the history of corporate public relations, there are few examples of an organization manipulating its public persona quite as effectively as the American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) Company did during the corporate presidency of Theodore N. Vail. From 1907 until Vail's retirement in 1919, by equating "one system, one policy, universal service" in telephony with serving the public interest, AT&T transformed its previous reputation as a vicious marketplace competitor hawking a commodity to becoming the queen of telecommunications, reigning supreme and solitaire for the next half century. The transformation of AT&T came during a defining period for American business. The public distrust and heightened governmental interest in the abuses within the private sector made the early years of the 20th century (as it does today) a worrisome time for monopolies. The trend towards nationalization of industries, particularly utilities, in other countries during this period make the public relations effort by AT&T to remain a private monopoly, albeit a regulated one, arguably a public relations coup of the period. Moreover, the efforts of AT&T to prevail in a highly competitive telecommunications field provides a valuable lesson for PR students and practitioners of today.

Structure of the Study

This study traces the development of the concept of "the public interest," which is a key concept in rationalizing monopolies. This concept, as ancient as the writings of Greek philosophers, evolved beyond political philosophy in 1907 when AT&T president Theodore Vail expanded the act of serving the public interest from the civil responsibility of protecting rights and establishing public order to include providing a convenience.

This paper then chronicles the marketplace reforms of the early 1900s during the Progressive Movement and how AT&T exploited rather than fought this movement. The issues management and employment of public relations techniques by AT&T president Vail are highlighted as it was he who understood how to read, reach, reassure and persuade his various publics to such a degree that his corporation remained virtually untouched by regulators for the next 50 years.

Evolution of the Public Interest concept

The 1877 *Munn v. Illinois* decision making it "legal for a state to regulate the rates of businesses that are affected with the public interest" began the process of modern regulation. Today's regulator governs to a greater or lesser extent the activities of practically any segment of the marketplace to include common carriers of various types, from water supply piping to telecommunications transmission cabling.[1] The concept of regulating any trade that serves the public interest has evolved to support the practice of regulating rather than abolishing "natural" monopolies. Assumed at the turn of the century to be enlightened economic theory, the justification of regulated monopolies as a natural sector of the economy has come under increased scrutiny as the 20th century comes to its close. In the United States, the calving of the "Baby Bells" from the AT&T system and inter-state/international telecommunications competition are symptoms of a growing political and hence public perception that the public interest may benefit more from the effects of more unhindered market forces than from "benevolent" government oversight.[2] While it can be argued that the government dictated that AT&T give up the Baby

Bells, this study points out that it was the government that became a willing agent in AT&T's monopolization of the telecommunications market.

The concept of acting "in the public interest" has certainly existed since our species has had reasonable social sophistication and idle time to contemplate human society.[3] Today the concept is employed to permit an otherwise competitive market aberration - the monopoly.[4] Indeed, the phrase "serving in the public interest" must be invoked (i.e. government must intervene) to allow many of the monopolistic organizations we now take for granted to exist in their current condition. Because the public interest can only be subjectively considered, it follows that there must be some culturally common understanding of *what* satisfies the general need.[5] Further, while acting in the public interest has been considered desirable, a long-standing debate also continues on determining *how* to best perform those activities.

The interpretation of what exists within the "public interest" has continuously become more specified since the concept was discussed in the philosophical literature of the Enlightenment period. Early thoughts on the matter usually centered around basic political rights and rights to property. Lord Chief Justice Matthew Hale stated in his AD 1670 decision that when private property is "affected with a public interest, it ceases to be *juris privati* only."[6] Previously, the English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, in his treatise, *Leviathan* (1651), asserted that "... where the public and private interest are most closely united, there is the public most advanced."[7] John Locke, in his *Second Treatise of Government,* recommended that the executive should have the power to act "according to discretion for the public good, without the prescription of the law and sometimes even against it," thereby arguing for, among other things, the provision and right of eminent domain, a critical tool for public utilities.[8]

In Colonial America, the concept of sovereignty evolved as rapidly as the growth of public sentiment for independence from Great Britain, for indeed, without a political rationalization for the change in the nature of sovereignty, any contemplation of independence was treasonous. As a result of the action for independence, not only was the ultimate vestment of sovereignty altered but the very concept of indivisible sovereignty was dispelled.

In his book, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Bernard Bailyn wrote that:

> "The course of intellectual, as well as of political and military, events had brought into question the entire concept of a unitary, concentrated, and absolute governmental sovereignty." [9]

The writers of the Declaration of Independence and The United States Constitution tinkered with various aspects of popular sovereignty, particularly the division of power. However, no matter how power was to be sliced and partitioned off, the founding fathers had no intention to allow segments of society to go unsupervised. James Madison, in paper number 10 of the Federalist Papers, examined and found wanting the ability of an unregulated market to operate in the public interest and he made a broad case for regulations:

> A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up by necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern regulation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government....It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good....[10]

The origins of U.S. government regulations

Clearly the governments of the people have been formed to guide and control the public's safety, health, morals, and general welfare. These are the public interests. Why else have a government? Why else would a society form a government? The U.S. Constitution was itself created to regulate one aspect of the general welfare - trade - which was not an issue successfully dealt with under the Articles of Confederation. One of the few powers delegated to the federal government in the Constitution, under what became known as the Commerce Clause, was the right to "regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian Tribes."[11] Ironically, the Commerce Clause lay dormant for nearly a century before the railroad corporate abuses created a public agitation enough to cause the invocation of the clause to begin the somewhat crude regulation of the huge monopolies of the 19th Century.[12]

Created by the 1887 "Act to Regulate Commerce," the Interstate Commerce Commission was tasked rather vaguely to regulate anything that "substantially affects interstate commerce." Once the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, the government was beginning, however, to form a distinct line between its role and that of business.[13]

The Progressive Movement

By the turn of the century, the public believed that its interests were no longer being served by industrialization run amok. Big Business went on the defensive and the country moved into the midst of the Progressive Movement (1900-1915).[14] The Progressive Movement can be characterized by the Muckraking Press, serious efforts to socialize industry and the increasing strength of the labor unions.[15] This movement was the acceleration of the swing of the political pendulum back from the government's hands-off (laissez faire) policies. It was these policies which resulted in abuses of power within the business sector to a point where it became difficult to overlook the faults of Big Business. According to Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian, Richard Hofstadler, the Progressive Movement was extremely "pervasive" and being a "Progressive" was the politically correct stance to take. As more and more abuses were discovered, the more the public looked for governmental solutions. Thus, the Progressive Movement became both the clarion call for investigations into abuse and the political reaction to the abuses when uncovered.[16]

Sir Winston Churchill summarized the feelings and events of the period when he wrote :

> By 1900, owing to their vigorous efforts, American industry was concentrated in a number of giant corporations, each with practically a monopoly in its chosen field. Yet it was at the same time an age of unrest, racked by severe growing pains.... Labor began to organize itself in Trade Unions and to confront the industrialists with a stiff bargaining power. These developments were to lead to a period of protest and reform in the early twentieth century. The gains conferred by large-scale industry were great and lasting, but the wrongs that had accompanied their making were only gradually righted. [17]

AT&T President Theodore Vail.

Theodore Vail, who had years earlier served as a manager in the old Bell system, was brought back in 1907 by AT&T financier J.P. Morgan to help the beleaguered AT&T corporation. An intelligent, powerfully built man with a colorful past, Vail was not one to merely give into the sentiments of the period.[18] Vail was truly the embodiment of the American Dream. As a child, he was part of the great westward migration and by the time he reached his mid-twenties, he had already demonstrated skills as a sod buster, telegrapher, pool player, baseballer and short-order cook. His one encounter with a hostile Native-American raiding party ended with Vail choosing the better part of valor -- an early demonstration of the practical nature of his judgment.[19] Due to his nature as a hard-working but innovative employee, Vail earned the favor of his superiors and his career in the Postal Service rocketed to the top. Although Vail was promoted rapidly, he had little faith in a system where his future seemed dictated by government politics and bureaucracy.[20] When the opportunity to leave government service on a high note came, Vail seized it, and became involved with the early activities of the little troupe trying to make an enterprise of Alexander Graham Bell's curious little toy, the telephone. Through in large measure Vail's efforts, the Bell company became successful.[21] It was during this period that Vail demonstrated an early talent for public relations techniques beyond simple publicity. His 1883 letter to a subsidiary company in Iowa included a set of queries regarding whether or not that subsidiary was providing service to the satisfaction of its customers.[22]

"Why not, therefore, have two telephones?"

When Vail took the reins of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) in 1907, his old company was now engaged in a bloody war of attrition with independent telephone companies emboldened by the recent expirations of the Bell System's series of patents.[23] In some communities, the competition even resulted in the installation of multiple and separate phone lines going to a single residence and the telephonic isolation of sections of the same community divided by customer preference of telephone service companies.[24] One independent telephone promoter asserted that "we have two ears, why not, therefore, have two telephones?"[25] According to regulated utilities historian, Paul Rogers, " In short order, dual and competing telephone systems brought chaos to the industry." [26] AT&T, at that time, instead of developing a spirit of customer-driven entrepreneuralism, had developed an arrogance which resulted in a poor public image.

Realizing, as few did at the time, the value of techniques we now know as modern public relations, Vail began to make his case for single provider - universal service of the telephone as a natural, desirable resource. In the face of a hostile public, a crusading force of national and state legislators, and the sheer momentum of the period, Vail would be swimming against the tide.

According to historian Alvin von Auw:

> Business historians recognize Vail as one of the two or three foremost organizing geniuses in the history of American industry. Competition was intense and often unpleasant. In the era of the trustbusters and the muckrakers, it took courage to proclaim monopoly. [27]

As president, Vail would face many and varied obstacles, which would include a potentially damaging anti-trust suit and the government's seizing of the phone company to support the last stages of World War I. At seemingly every step, Vail and his staff were nimble enough to grasp the significance of every opportunity and to turn disaster into advantage. From almost day one when he promoted a stock split option that garnered an extra $20 million for the coffers and helped AT&T ride out the Panic of '07, Vail seemed one step ahead of his time.[28] Perhaps his greatest achievement was convincing others of his vision of a one-system/universal telephone service. In his 1907 AT&T Annual Report (his favorite public forum), Vail stated, "Duplication of plant is a waste to the investor. Duplication of charges is a waste to the user." [29] Seeking to apply the concept of serving "in public interest" to telephone services, Vail argued the case for regulated monopolies in 1907, three years before the Mann-Elkins Act extended the ICC's regulatory powers over the telephone industry.[30]

The Kingsbury Commitment

Between 1907 and 1910, Vail's company had absorbed more independent companies than remained outside their system - thereby galloping ever closer to a single service/universal system, i.e., a monopoly.[31] With each acquisition, AT&T was creating a buildup of local public resentment. This resentment, naturally, resulted in a local lawsuit. Rather than hunker down behind a breastwork of lawyers, Vail executed a flanking maneuver worthy of the finest cavalry commander. In the famous Kingsbury Commitment episode of 1913, AT&T, in a letter sent by Vice President Nathan C. Kingsbury to the U.S. Attorney General, promised to divest some of its holdings to meet demands of trustbusters. This was a bold, proactive move. In the letter, AT&T also offered as sacrifice the leverage it held as the leading long-distance carrier with the ability to refuse service to local competing companies. The company hoped to be able to retain the cohesion of its core business - its currently-owned local and long-distance telephone service. Considering that trust-busting efforts had already counted Standard Oil and the Tobacco Trust among its victims, AT&T made its move and braced for the worst.[32] However, after the smoke cleared, what was *gained* had incredible value - tacit understanding by the federal government that AT&T was *the* long distance carrier.

To quote public utilities commentator, Robert Horwitz:

> The Kingsbury Commitment marked the beginning of the re-emergence of Bell dominance....by reducing competition between Bell and the independents, the Commitment also established a presumption of telephony as a local monopoly.... AT&T, successfully arguing the case for telephony as a natural monopoly, welcomed the government intervention which served to secure its control over the industry. Apart from the Kingsbury Commitment, however, there was no effective regulation of AT&T during this era. AT&T obtained the benefit of a *de facto* sanctioned monopoly without the *quid pro quo* of regulatory oversight.[33]

Even the unfavorable sections of the Kingsbury Commitment were almost immediately modified by the 1921 Willis-Graham Act which allowed telephone companies to merge upon approval of the ICC "when found to be in the public interest." [34] According to Horwitz, this meant that "following the Kingsbury Commitment's mandate of interconnection, Willis-Graham provided antitrust immunity to AT&T." [35]

Vail and his company had survived the trustbusters relatively intact and did so with AT&T's future not only assured but strengthened. The telephone industry became a recognized natural monopoly, a condition that, for its time, satisfied trustbusters, the government, shareholders, and eliminated the duplication of services so annoying to customers. This was an apparent win-win conclusion to the telephone competition era.

Vail's Public Relations Style

While other companies of the period began to use advertisements to reach their publics, Vail used his annual reports as a favorite forum for his public relations campaigns.[36] Indeed, according to James Grunig and Todd Hunt in their text, Managing Public Relations, "...Theodore Vail had pioneered the use of the term, 'public relations' in his annual reports in the early 1900s."[37] Indeed, he even used the term, "public relations" as the title of a section of these reports.[38] Each year, he repeated his conviction that the public is best served by a regulated telephone monopoly, not by competition and not by government-owned systems. Interestingly, Vail, in his 1910 Annual

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Report seems to argue for standardized and central control of telephone services that some might suggest means, in essence, national government management:

> Interdependence, intercommunication, universality, cannot be had with isolated systems under independent control, however well connected. They require the standardization of operating methods, plant facilities and equipment, and that complete harmony and co-operation of operating forces, that can only come through centralized or common control.[39]

While the debate on how best to own and operate public utilities, whether government-owned or as a regulated monopoly or as a free enterprise, continues as of this writing, Vail clarified his position as far as telephone service was concerned through his annual reports stating that "Government ownership (of a utility) would be an unregulated monopoly." However, to allow telephone competition in a free market "means duplication of plant and investment...all costs of aggressive, uncontrolled competition are eventually borne directly or indirectly by the public."[40]

Even when the system was "postalized" (a term meaning nationalized or government-owned and operated) towards the end of World War I, the telephone company was returned to corporate hands after the war. Incredibly, the government had even paid AT&T shareholders dividends during the postalization period. As Vail had offered the services of his company and his employees to government service as a patriotic gesture, that the government seemed comfortable returning its phone system back to private hands seemed to be in part due to its gratitude and confidence in Vail's ethical leadership.[41] Upon signing U.S. Government Order 3380 in July 1919 transferring the telephone service back to AT&T, the Postmaster general (under whose charge the telephone service was maintained during the war) wrote Vail, "I cannot confer a D.S.O. (Distinguished Service Order) on you, but I can say that you deserve the honor."[42]

By the time Vail retired from the presidency in 1919 and accepted the role as Chairman of the Board, he created an indelible concept of the nature of telephone service. It should be a single owned and operated system, or as Vail said in the 1910 Annual Report, and anywhere else he could, "One system, one policy, universal service."[43] Any other form of telephony would be, in

Vail's view, a disservice to the public. In the following statement, Vail established as clear a description of and a need for a natural monopoly as can be stated:

> Two exchanges, each with the same list of subscribers, cannot, in the nature of things, exist. One or the other would be unnecessary because a subscriber would be paying twice for the same service when either exchange gave all that could be obtained from both. It would be like paying two fares each time you ride on a street car to maintain a parallel line, although you could ride in but one at a time. Competition of that character increases the cost to you. Competition is only of service when it reduces your cost or increase your service. [44]

Vail's Impact

AT&T became Vail's legacy. In point of fact, one may argue AT&T became Theodore Vail -- pugnacious, innovative, flexible when necessary, and able to employ outstanding public relations techniques to meet any manner of corporate danger. Telephone historian, Alvin von Auw in his book, *Heritage & Destiny*, noted the impact of Vail on future public relations of AT&T:

> What over the years has distinguished AT&T's annual report from most is the extent to which it has been used to convey the company's "views on public policy." The precedent is Vail's. In the annual reports he signed - and wrote - in the years 1907 through 1919 - not only are the operating principles set forth that have guided the Bell System for nearly all the years since but so are the terms of the company's relationship to the public it serves. It is not graphological evidence that makes it certain Vail wrote what he signed but rather its style. It is a style remarkable not for grace but for pith and bite, a style with the force of adage. [45]

Von Auw further contends that "Vail's theme - enterprise in the context of regulation - has been echoed in nearly every Bell System pronouncement on the matter from his day to ours." [46] While Vail was physically a large man, his shadow has loomed larger still.

In 1935, an FCC investigation of the AT&T empire was published in the "Walker Report," named for the FCC commissioner, Paul A. Walker. In that report, AT&T's subsidiary, Western Electric, maker of telephone equipment, was found to pass on charges which cost telephone rate payers $51 million in overcharges per year. Under the threat of government nationalization of the telephone industry at most or heavy sanctions at the very least, AT&T's public relations staff were able to kill most of the Walker Report's recommendations.[47] According to Robert Horwitz:

> AT&T orchestrated an extensive campaign to undermine the report's recommendations. In the fall of 1938, AT&T issued a "Brief on the Proposed Report" which attempted to refute the Walker Report point by point, and which criticized the *ex parte* nature of many of the proceedings held under the investigation. The campaign was successful in moderating the FCC's Final report....Because of the complex interrelation between the perception of the public interest in telephony, the maintenance of the telephone system as a system, and the integrated structure of AT&T, most of the Walker Report's recommendations were dropped in the FCC Final Report. The FCC simply asserted the necessity of the regulation of telephony....[48]

The FCC investigation was extensive but the investigative energies did not seem to be matched by an equally rigorous follow-through. In defense of the FCC, the motives of the Congress in ordering an investigation into AT&T's activities were murky at best and seen in more suspicious eyes was an anti-business "witch hunt." However, the fact remains that after four years of investigation, the FCC actually did little to penalize AT&T. [49]

To sum up how a monopoly flourished as virtually a robber baron-era creation in an age of legislative and public activism, Robert Horwitz stated:

> If there were a bottom line to communication regulation, it would be that the FCC acted to safeguard the continuous provision of service to the public. The regulation of telecommunications was essentially protective because, despite problems, the system worked. The FCC's reluctance to challenge the industry was understandable. After all, AT&T was one of the world's largest, most successful enterprises. It provided a technically sophisticated service rather well. Who was the FCC - an agency composed of lawyers, former broadcasters, and a few technicians - to barge in and perhaps muck up the nationwide telephone service? [50]

A nation of inveterate tinkers where there were once dozens of automobile companies, hundreds of electric companies and thousands of water utilities, Vail had the public and its government convinced in the inviolate resource nature of single-service telephony. Until the long-distance competition and breakup of the "Baby Bells" in the 1980s, AT&T remained almost monolithic and untouchable.

The Future of the Telephone

The future of telephone regulation is uncertain. In an era of multiple communication "carriers" such as cable & telephone lines and cellular & satellite-assisted electronic wave propagation, there are regulatory concerns certainly extensive and diverse enough to transcend the scope of this paper.[51]

However, change there will be. The entire scope of telecommunications within the regulatory context and the public's own regulatory umbrella paradigm needs re-examination. In an age of information and communication, the very tools that command the period, and ensure the safety, security and prosperity of a people, i.e. the public interest, should be considered as vital as any other national resource. In that regard, Vail was right.

While there is no evidence Vail envisioned an era of individual empowerment through communication technology, he clearly understood the role of the telephone in society. Historian Alan von Auw observed that during the first decade of our century "the U.S. was a nation of neighborhoods. Now the nation is itself a neighborhood..."[52] Perhaps in Vail's time, the single-source telephone company was needed to ensure the financial and research strength to advance telecommunications. It is to Mr. Vail's credit that he developed within AT&T a corporate culture which remained relatively responsive to the public interest until technology, the economy and the public interest matured to a point where Vail's words are best remembered for forwarding an example of corporate public relations that was ahead of his time.

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Notes

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2. Shooshaw, Harry III. Principal, Strategic Policy Research Center. Interview with author, Gainesville, Florida, April 27, 1995.

3. See, for example, Plato's dialogue, "Meno" where Meno and Socrates engage in a discussion on virtue. Socrates asks, "Is it possible to manage a city well, or household or anything else, while not managing it moderately and justly - certainly not. Then if they manage justly and moderately, they must do so with justice and moderation - necessarily." Translated and reprinted. Classics of Western Philosophy, 3rd edition. Steven Cahn, editor. Cambridge, England: Hackett Publishing. 1977, 1990. p 6,

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12. Contemporary Transportation. p. 37.

13. Fisher, Bruce and Marianne Jennings. Law for Business. St. Paul: West Publishing Co. 1986. p. 158.

14. Hofstadter, Richard. The Progressive Movement - 1900-1915. NY: Touchstone Books (Simon and Schuster). 1963, 1986. p. 1.

15. Ibid. pp 18-20, 93-104. note: Examples of writings and speeches indicative of the mood of the period include Theodore Roosevelt's April 14, 1906 "muckraker" speech at the dedication of the House Office Building when he coined the phrase to describe journalism of the period. Other examples include Ida Tarbell's expose of Standard Oil, Walter Weyl on the evils of plutocracy, Herbert Croly decrying the growing strength of the labor unions, and Samuel Gompers defending that growth. Excerpts of the above reprinted in the work cited.

16. Brady, Kathleen. Ida Tarbell - Portrait of a Muckraker. NY: Seaview/Putnam. 1984. pp 120-121. note: It is not always clear what motivates political activity. According to Brady, McClure's Magazine had sagging circulation when it decided to expose U.S. Steel and Standard Oil. Brady stated, later, that Tarbell, herself, held AT&T stock which, due to its solid financial reputation retained its worth and helped Tarbell weather the stock market crash of 1929.

17. Churchill, Winston. History of the English-Speaking Peoples. NY: Barnes & Noble. 1955, 1994. pp 443-444.

18. Brooks, John. Telephone: the first hundred years. NY: Harper & Row. 1975, 1976. pp 102-126.

19. Paine, A.B., In One Man's Life, New York: Harper Bros. 1921. pp 26-66. Paine was Vail's confidant and personal biographer.

20. Ibid. pp 67-97

21. Telephone. pp 127-135.

22. Golden, L.L.L. Only by Public Consent. NY: Hawthorne Books. 1968. pp 27-29

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25. Casson, Hubert N. The History of the Telephone. Chicago: AC McClurg and Co. 1910 p 190.

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27. Von Auw, Alvin. Heritage and Destiny: Reflections on the Bell System in Transition. NY: Praeger Publishers. 1983.

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29. 1907 AT&T Annual Report. AT&T Archives.

30. Ibid. pp 12-13.

31. "Investigation of the Telephone Industry in the U.S." Washington DC: Federal Communications Commission. June 14, 1939. pp 128-146.

32. Telephone. pp 135-136.

33. Horwitz, Robert. The Irony of Regulatory Reform - The Deregulation of American Telecommunications. NY: Oxford University Press. 1989. p 101.

34. NARUC. p 28.

35. Irony. p 102.

36. Congressional Record - Senate. February 25, 1907. p 3872 note: Senator Beveridge comments on a recent advertisement by Swift & Company, (reprinted in the Record) where company president, Louis F. Swift states that new 1906 federal meat packing regulations are welcomed: "It is a wise law. Its enforcement must be universal and uniform." Senator Beveridge noted that when corporations state that they appreciate the imposition of regulation, these statements should be taken at face value because in Swift's case "the most beneficial thing that ever happened to them after they were put to the inconvenience of cleaning their plants, was the advertisement which this law gives them." This may suggest that Theodore Vail was inspired by if not actually following the lead of others when he welcomed telephone regulation.

37. Grunig, James and Todd Hunt. Managing Public Relations. NY: Rinehart and Winston. 1984. p 35

38. See 1911 and 1912 AT&T Annual Reports. (AT&T Archives)

39. 1910 AT&T Annual Report. (AT&T Archives). p 27.

40. Heritage. p 262.

41. Telephone. p 153. According to Brooks, Vail went into the preliminary meeting with the government on the postalization issued worried the government was going to take the system and never return it. The government had already acquired a telephone system for its naval base at Hampton Roads (see The Congressional Record - House June 7, 1917. Amendment to HR 3971 - Military/Naval Appropriations. p 3276)

42. In One Man's Life. p 333.

43. 1910 AT&T Annual Report. p 24.

44. Ibid. p 28.

45. Heritage. p 261.

46. Ibid. p 6.

47. Irony. pp 137-139

48. Ibid. p 138.

49. Telephone. pp 196-199.

50. Irony. p 128

51. There is an ever increasing public discussion on the future of telecommunications. A sampling of sources useful for further investigation include:

> Loube, R. "Price Cap Regulation and Cross Subsidization." *Proceedings of the Eighth NARUC Biennial Regulatory Information Conference.* Vol II: Telecommunications, October 1992.
>
> Pilalis, L. "Privatization and Regulation in International Telecommunications"
> Burney, D.M. "A Financial Analysis of the Bell Holding Companies." and
> Cross, Phillip. "NARUC in Reno - Gambling on Competition." *Public Utilities Fortnightly*. January 1, 1995. p 11.
>
> "PUR Guide." *Public Utility Reports.* 1985 edition and subsequent editions.
>
> Samuel, Peter. "Telecommunications after the Bell breakup." Unnatural Monopolies and the Case for Deregulation. Robert Poole, editor. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books. 1985. p 181.

52. Heritage. p 6.

The Paradox of Parenting Magazines: Cultivation Theory and Information Seeking

Valerie Barker
Master of Science
Mass Communication Program
School of Communication
San Diego State University

David Dozier
Professor of Communication
School of Communication
San Diego State University

Paper presented to the Mass Communication and Society Division,
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual
Conference, Anaheim, California, August 10, 1996

Abstract

The Paradox of Parenting Magazines: Cultivation Theory and Information Seeking

Valerie Barker & David Dozier
School of Communication
San Diego State University

The study provides evidence that parenting magazines manifest traditional images of motherhood that distort actual lifestyles of contemporary American mothers. Mothers working outside the home and single mothers are systematically underrepresented in the articles, advertisements, and visual images in parenting magazines.

In a survey of 396 mothers, cultivation and information seeking were tested as rival theories. Passive exposure to parenting magazines was not positively correlated with traditional values about motherhood, disconfirming cultivation theory. Further, no resonance effect was detected.

Rather, non-traditional lifestyles (e.g., single parenting, working outside the home) drive information seeking and undermine traditional motherhood values. Information seeking drives active magazine exposure. Mothers use reality monitoring procedures to sift out traditional messages inconsistent with their real-world experiences.

Paper presented to the Mass Communication and Society Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Conference, Anaheim, California, August 10, 1996

The Paradox of Parenting Magazines: Cultivation Theory and Information Seeking

The present study tests whether cultivation theory or an information seeking perspective provides the best explanation for relationships between lifestyle attributes, values, and exposure to media content resonant with those attributes and values.[1] Parenting magazines and the mothers who read them provide the research context. The study seeks to answer three related questions. First, does the content of parenting magazines manifest traditional, stereotypic images of motherhood, at odds with real-world indicators of contemporary motherhood? Second, if such mainstream messages dominate parenting magazine content, does level of exposure to these messages cultivate a traditional world view of motherhood? Third, does information-seeking behavior provide a more useful framework for explaining the relations between traditional lifestyle attributes, traditional values, and exposure to traditional media content with regard to motherhood?

Theoretical Issues

Cultivation theory provides a plausible theoretical framework for understanding how media content affects audiences. Unlike powerful media effects posited prior to Klapper (1961), cultivation theory likens the effects of media content to accretion, the gradual addition or accumulation of small effects over extended periods of exposure. Just as stalagmites and stalactites in lime caves grow to massive proportions over the centuries, so

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too exposure to media content exerts an accumulated effect over thousands of exposure-hours spread over many years. In this way, cultivation theory can account for limited or no effects of short-term media exposure on attitude formation and change.

World views and Mainstreaming

Researchers look for cultivation effects in the world views of those exposed to certain media content. World views are assumptions or presuppositions that people hold about the world and how it works. World views are embedded in the content of media. Extensive, long-term exposure to media content theoretically cultivates a world view in the audience member consistent with the one embedded in media content.

According to cultivation researchers, the world views embedded in media content are neither quirky nor inconsistent. Rather, media world views cling to the status quo and the mainstream. Mainstream messages in media content tend to homogenize a diverse, heterogeneous reality. Such messages perpetuate ethnic and gender stereotypes, simplified world views that homogenize the rich diversity that exists within these subgroups (Gerbner, 1993).

Resonance

Audience members respond differently to world views embedded in media content, depending on their lifestyle attributes that either resonate or conflict with media-based world views. Resonance occurs when the everyday real-world environment of the audience member corresponds with the world view embedded in media content. Resonance intensifies the cultivation effect; thus, relevant lifestyle attributes mediate the relation between exposure to media content and cultivation of world views (Signorielli & Morgan, 1990).

Television and Other Media

Cultivation research has focused extensively on television content. Gerbner (1993) provides evidence that television content contains images of women and minorities that are anachronistic and harmful. Related research provides evidence that viewers generalize the messages embedded in television content to the real world (Gerbner, 1969, 1978, 1993; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1986).

Do media other than television cultivate distorted world views of audiences? Extending cultivation effects to media other than television requires high levels of exposure over extended periods of time. In addition, media messages must differ in substantial ways from what one finds in the real world. Content analyses of newspapers, teenager and women magazines, and comic strips provide evidence of distorted world views in the form of sex-role stereotypes (Beuf, 1974; Busby & Leichty, 1993; Chavez, 1985; Demarest & Gardner, 1992; Franzwa, 1974; Pierce, 1993; Phillips, 1978; Ruggiero & Weston, 1985). However, the evidence is less compelling that such distorted world views foster similar distortions in those exposed to them.

The accretion imperative puts cultivation theory to rigorous test when applied to media other than television. No other medium of mass communication occupies such a central role in the daily lives of Americans. According to Gerbner (1993), children today are born into homes where the television set is on an average of seven hours a day; a third of an American's discretionary time is spent with television, greater than the next ten leisure items combined. Morgan and Signorielli (1990) note that, of the seven hours that the television set is on, each individual family member watches an average of three hours daily. At 21+ hours of exposure a week, no other medium can rival television's massive exposure levels. Regarding parenting magazines, reading time averaged an hour per week among those who read such magazines. Thus, examining cultivation in the parenting magazine context puts the theory to rigorous test. Is cultivation theory only applicable to television viewing. Or is the theory sufficiently robust for application to media other than television?

Active vs. Passive Exposure to Content

Audience members differ in the cognitive energy they invest in processing media content. Active exposure is conceptualized as the purposive processing of information in media content. Passive exposure is conceptualized as raw exposure, without regard to cognitive processes that such exposure involves. Rubin (1986) described ritual and instrumental uses of television. Instrumental use involves paying attention to television content in order to seek information. Ritual use of television serves diversionary purposes. Regarding uses, Carveth and Alexander (1985) drew a similar distinction between reality exploration vs. passing time.

Audience uses of media reflect one aspect the larger cognitive processes involved in processing new information. The elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) suggests two routes whereby information is processed. A central route involves active information processing where new information is consciously processed and reconciled with information already received. A peripheral route involves handling information in a more casual manner. Less thought is dedicated to processing the information and quick peripheral cues are used to sort the information.

Cultivation theory seems most efficacious when audience members are exposed passively to media content. Several studies provide evidence that active exposure to—and instrumental uses of—television content inhibits cultivation effects (Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Hawkins & Pingree, 1982; Perse, 1986; Pingree, 1983). Active exposure, on the other hand, is linked conceptually to processing information via the central route in an information-seeking modality aimed at reducing uncertainty. Both active and passive exposure to parenting magazines were measured in the present study.

Cause or Effect?

One of the most daunting challenges in cultivation research is to determine the direction of causality in the frequently observed correlations between exposure and world view. Doob and Macdonald (1979) provided an early critique of the causal assumption in cultivation theory. The "mean world" hypothesis derived from cultivation theory states that people exposed to high levels of television violence will regard the world as meaner (more violent) than people exposed to lower levels of television. Doob and Macdonald posed an alternative theoretical explanation: the audience member's world view causes him or her to watch more television. Audience world view is caused by an environmental condition: living in a high-crime neighborhood. When researchers conducted door-to-door interviews in high-crime and low-crime neighborhoods, they found that people who lived in high-crime neighborhoods thought the world a mean place and stayed indoors watching television. People in low-crime neighborhoods were not as inclined to regard the world as mean and watched less television. Controlling for neighborhood crime, the relationship between television exposure and mean world view disappeared.

Testing Cultivation Effects of Parenting Magazines

The present study permits a different test of the causal argument in cultivation theory. First, the relationship between passive exposure and world view is tested. According to cultivation theory, a positive relationship is posited between passive exposure and world view consistent with media content. Lifestyle attributes cause media content to resonate for some audience members and not for others. In the present study, this required development of a traditional lifestyle typology to test the mediation role of resonance. Some mothers manifest a traditional lifestyle consisting of two attributes: married women who work exclusively in the home. However, changes in marital status or labor force participation act individually or in concert to thrust some mothers into non-traditional lifestyles. Single mothers who work outside the home exemplify such non-traditional lifestyles. A typology of lifestyle attributes is shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Using the lifestyle typology in Figure 1, Figure 2 displays the causal relationships specified by cultivation theory. Passive exposure to parenting magazines (manifesting traditional world views of motherhood) cultivates traditional values about motherhood. Moreover, traditional lifestyle attributes mediate the cultivation effect: the strength of the cultivation effect resonates (becomes intensified) among those mothers whose traditional lifestyles matches those portrayed in the manifest content of the parenting magazines they read.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

Testing Information Seeking Predispositions

Figure 3 displays a fundamentally different set of relations between media exposure, lifestyle attributes, and traditional views of motherhood. Individual uncertainty and information seeking predispositions about motherhood and parenting play central roles in this alternative model. Uncertainty is posited as a consequence of non-traditional lifestyle attributes that generates behavioral predispositions to seek additional information about motherhood and parenting. The elaboration likelihood model suggests that a mainstream world view—traditional values regarding motherhood in this setting—decreases the perceived need for more information about parenting. That is, focal attitudes about motherhood and parenting require little new information. This is especially the case when a woman's traditional world view of motherhood is supported by traditional lifestyle attributes (e.g., married mother working exclusively in the home). Traditional lifestyle attributes support traditional values toward motherhood and decrease the need for more information about motherhood and parenting.

Lifestyle changes increase uncertainty. Non-traditional lifestyle attributes—such as single marital status, working outside the home, or both—tend to de-stabilize traditional values about motherhood and spur the need for more information. It is this uncertainty and the need for additional information that drives the mother's active exposure to parenting magazines.

This argument is similar in form to the Doob and Macdonald critique of cultivation theory: real-world circumstances cause both world view and exposure levels. Whereas Doob and Macdonald treat television exposure as a diversionary activity in neighborhoods where it's too dangerous to go outdoors, the present theory regards exposure to parenting magazines as instrumental. Active reading of parenting magazines is regarded as a mother's instrumental response to uncertainty, driven by de-stabilizing lifestyle changes and eroding traditional values about motherhood.

FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

Methodology

The present study consisted of two research components. First, an extensive content analysis was conducted of parenting magazines to determine if manifest content supported a traditional world view of parenting and motherhood at odds with real-world indicators. Second, a survey was conducted of a representative sample of mothers to test relations between exposure to parenting magazines, lifestyle attributes, and values regarding motherhood.

Content Analysis

Content analysis was conducted on eight parenting magazines over a one-year period (1994-1995), using a dimensional sampling strategy to select the magazines and systematic sampling to select the particular issues analyzed. Seven nationally circulated magazines were analyzed: Family Life, Parenting, Parents, American Baby, Working Mother, Sesame Street Magazine and Parents Guide, and Baby Talk. In addition, a local parenting tabloid was also analyzed. Combined circulation of the magazines totaled 7.5 million.

In all, 32 issues of parenting magazines were content analyzed, including 532 articles, 345 women in advertisements, and 403 women in visual images. Six categories of content were analyzed. For each content category, real world indicators or standards were available from the Bureau of the Census or other authoritative sources. Regarding employment, 62 percent of mothers with children under six years work outside the home; 75 percent of mothers with school age children work outside the home. Regarding professions, 25 percent of mothers working outside the home (15 percent of all mothers) do so in professions (e.g., law, medicine, engineering). Regarding single parenting, 25 percent of families have only one parent. Of those, 87 percent are single mothers. Regarding fathers as primary care givers, the data are less reliable, but best estimates indicate that fathers are primary care givers in about 10 percent of families. Regarding race, 26 percent of American families are not white. Regarding mother's age, 36% of mothers are 30 or older at time of birth.

Intercoder reliability scores for the content analysis variables were within acceptable parameters (i.e., above .80). Concerning intercoder reliability of the variables most relevant to the research hypotheses, coding mothers working inside-outside the home posted a reliability coefficient (simple agreement) of .97. In coding single mothers, a reliability coefficient of .98 was posted.

Survey

Using random digit dialing, a probability sample of households with telephones was drawn within a county in the southwestern United States, inclusive of the sixth largest city in America. English-speaking mothers with children 12 and younger living with them were interviewed. Initial sample size was 8,188. Removing business numbers, government numbers, fax numbers, non-qualifying households, language barriers, and noncontacts, interviews were completed with 396 mothers (55 percent) while 325 refused (45 percent).

Indices were constructed for traditional motherhood lifestyles, traditional motherhood values, parental information seeking, and active exposure. Two stand-alone variables were used to measure passive exposure.

Traditional motherhood lifestyles typology. Lifestyle attributes play a key role in cultivation theory. Lifestyle attributes also contribute to the uncertainty and motivate information seeking. Specifically, two important traditional lifestyle attributes include marriage and working within the home. Mothers working outside the home and those who are unmarried are enacting non-traditional lifestyles. Therefore, a typology was devised to provide a single index of traditionalism for these two attributes. Married mothers working exclusively in the home exhibit the most traditional configuration of these two attributes. These mothers were assigned a score of 4. Single mothers working outside the home exhibit the least traditional configuration. They were assigned a score of 1. Being unmarried was deemed a greater break with traditional motherhood than working outside the household. Therefore, married mothers working outside the home were assigned scores of 3. Unmarried mothers working inside the home (a small number) were assigned scores of 2. The breakdown of respondents by lifestyle type is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Passive exposure. Two measures of passive exposure were included in the questionnaire. The first asked respondents who read parenting magazines how many issues of parenting magazines they had read in the last six months. The second probe asked respondents who read parenting magazines how much time they spent reading parenting magazines each week. Various responses to this probe (in minutes, hours, etc.) were converted into minutes during data reduction. The two indicators provide alternative measures of passive exposure. On average, mothers who read parenting magazines read an average of 5.4 issues over the last six months, spending little over an hour each week reading them. See Table 2.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

Active exposure. Respondents were asked how often they made active use of parenting magazine content. They were asked to indicate if they performed each activity often, sometimes, or almost never. Five items measured instrumental use of parenting magazine content. The items are shown in the lower portion of Table 2. The five items were subjected to factor analysis, yielding a single factor solution. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the index was .59.

Traditional motherhood index. An index was constructed to measure traditional motherhood values among mothers in the survey. Mothers were asked if they agreed, felt neutral about, or disagreed with six opinion statements about motherhood. One of the items (a woman can have a successful career and be a good mother too) was reflected so that disagreement with the item increased the respondent's score on the traditional motherhood values index. The six items were factor analyzed, yielding a single factor solution. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the index was .66. See Table 3.

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

Parental information seeking index. Respondents were asked if they would be interested in receiving free brochures on various parenting topics. For each brochure, respondents indicated if they would be very interested, somewhat interested, or not interested in receiving such a brochure. Seven brochure topics were created which, when summed, produced an index of parent information seeking for each respondent. The seven items are shown in Table 4. The seven items were factor analyzed, yielding a single factor solution. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was .68.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

Findings

The content analysis provided strong empirical evidence that parenting magazines manifest distorted images of parenting and motherhood. The findings are displayed in Table 5, broken down by articles, advertisements, and visual images. Margin of error estimates are provided for percentages generated by the content analysis. The real world indicators are treated as parameters.

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

Results of Content Analysis

Regarding single mothers, 22 percent of American families are headed by single mothers. In parenting magazines, fewer than 1 percent of families could be identified as single-mother families. Regarding employment, fully 62 percent of mothers in the real world work outside the home. In parenting magazines, only 6 to 15 percent of mothers appeared to work outside the home (depending on content category). Regarding professions, 15 percent of working mothers in the real world work in the professions. In parenting magazines, only 3 to 4 percent appeared to work in the professions. Regarding mothers of color, non-white women make up 25 percent of mothers in the United States. In parenting magazines, women of color make up only 7 to 11 percent of mothers. Regarding fathers as main care givers, best indicators estimate that about 10 percent of families have fathers as primary care givers. In parenting magazine articles, fathers appeared as primary care givers in only 4 percent of families. In advertisements and visual images, however, fathers appeared a primary care givers in 14 percent and 16 percent of families respectively. These findings were counter to expectations. Regarding mother's age, older mothers were significantly over-represented in articles and visual images, while slightly over-represented in the advertisements. These findings were counter to expectations.

In summary, the content analysis of articles indicated distorted images of parenting and motherhood in five of six content categories. Analysis of advertising and visual images indicated distorted images of motherhood and parenting in four of six categories. Especially regarding marital status and employment outside the home, parenting magazines manifest traditional, mainstream content which greatly distorts the contemporary realities of motherhood and parenting.

Survey Results

The typical mother in the survey was 34.5 years old, rearing 2 children on average, with the oldest averaging 8.6 years and the youngest 5.3 years. About a third were housewives exclusively, but the 67 percent who worked outside the home averaged 33.1 hours of work each week. About 18 percent of working mothers were in professions while another 28 percent worked in white collar jobs. About 76 percent were married and 3 percent said they lived with a man. The remaining 21 percent were single, divorced, or separated.

Average annual household income was $50,000 a year, median income was $42,000. About 76 percent described their ethnic status as white, 14 percent were Hispanic, 7 percent were African American, and 7 percent were Asian or Pacific Islanders. Regarding education, 24 percent had completed high school or less, while another 40 percent had completed some college. Twenty percent had earned bachelor's degrees and 11 percent had gone to at least some graduate school.

Test of Cultivation Theory

The theoretical model displayed in Figure 2 permitted two separate tests of cultivation theory, involving two separate measures of passive exposure to parenting magazine content. The first involved testing the hypothesized correlations between the number of issues of parenting magazines read over the past six months and the traditional motherhood values index, controlling for lifestyle attributes. See Figure 4.

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

The second involved testing hypothesized correlations between the number of minutes spend reading parenting magazines each week and the values index, controlling for lifestyle attributes. See Figure 5.

FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE

The path between exposure and traditional motherhood values in each model (path A) is the zero-order correlation coefficient. The mediating influence of lifestyle attributes, path B, represented the partial correlation between exposure and values, controlling for the influence of lifestyle attributes in the typology.

The findings disconfirm both propositions of the cultivation model, when applied to parenting magazines. First, there is no significant correlation between either measure of passive exposure to parenting magazines and traditional motherhood values. Indeed, in the sample, both zero-order correlations are negative, counter to cultivation theory. Second, the mediating influences of lifestyle attributes (resonance effect), represented by partial correlation coefficients, are not statistically significant.

The statistical purist may take exception to treating the lifestyle typology as an interval-ratio level measure in computing partial correlation coefficients. Therefore, Table 6 provides an alternative test of resonance effect. The zero-order correlation coefficient was computed separately for each lifestyle type. According to theory, correlation coefficients between exposure and traditional values are hypothesized to be greater (and positive) for traditional lifestyle attributes than non-traditional lifestyle attributes. In addition to testing the four types, additional tests were made of married and unmarried mothers separately (without regard to employment status). Separate tests were also conducted of mothers working in the home exclusively and mothers working outside the home (without regard to marital status). Fifteen of the 16 tests yielded negative correlation coefficients; cultivation theory posits positive relationships, especially for traditional lifestyle attributes. Two relationships that border on statistical significance are negative relationships, not positive relationships indicated by cultivation theory.

TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

In summary, both the cultivation effect and the resonance effect of cultivation theory were disconfirmed for readers of parenting magazines. Weak, negative correlations were detected for exposure measures and traditional motherhood values. Further, weak negative correlations for exposure and values were detected for mothers with lifestyles most resonant with those portrayed in parenting magazines. Indeed, the negative relationships approached statistical significance among married mothers and among mothers working exclusively within the home.

Test of Uncertainty and Information Seeking

Figure 6 displays the zero-order correlation coefficients that test the information seeking model posed in Figure 3. All predicted relationships are statistically significant. That is, traditional motherhood lifestyle attributes (married mothers working exclusively within the home) provide a nurturing environment for the formation and maintenance of traditional motherhood values. Uncertainty is low, so both traditional values and traditional lifestyles reduce information seeking behavior of traditional moms. On the other hand, when major traditional lifestyle attributes change through divorce or entry into the paid labor force, traditional values about motherhood are undermined.

Thus, traditional lifestyle attributes are positively correlated with traditional motherhood values. Both are negatively correlated with information seeking predispositions. Information seeking predispositions, measured by interest in obtaining parenting brochures, are positively correlated with active exposure to parenting magazines.

Discussion and Implications

The implications of the present study branch in different theoretical directions, depending on what's meant by "cultivation effects." Such effects can be narrowly defined as distorted world views cultivated in audiences by high levels of passive, undifferentiated exposure to distorted media content. If so defined, the present study provides evidence that cultivation theory is not specified for parenting magazines. Disconfirmation of both cultivation and resonance effects suggest that cultivation effects may be specific to television alone, through the combination of both massive, ongoing exposure and relatively passive processing of information through the peripheral route.

More broadly defined, however, cultivation effects may be viewed as distortions of reality in line with any media content that systematically misrepresents the world. Audience motives, content perceptions, and processing routes mediate the effects of exposure on such audience distortions. The twin concepts of uncertainty and information seeking provide a useful paradigm shift in understanding how audiences actively process information. As suggested by the uses and effects perspective (Rubin, 1986; Rubin & Perse, 1987), an active audience member seeks out media content to satisfy certain instrumental functions. Single, working (outside the home) mothers are more likely to exhibit information seeking predispositions and to actively use the information they glean from parenting magazines. These same single, working moms are most likely to reject the traditional values manifest in the content of parenting magazines.

The Paradox

The paradox, then, of parenting magazines is simply this: the mothers most likely to need information about motherhood and parenting are the ones most antithetical to the illusions of motherhood projected through these publications. Traditional married, stay-at-home mothers who read parenting magazines spend no more time reading them nor do they look at more issues (over time) than do single, working moms.

The findings of this study suggest a larger theoretical paradox. Women who pay attention to the content of parenting magazines most actively are the least likely to heed the traditional ideology manifest in those magazines. This finding is consistent with the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and the active processing of information through the central route. Findings of this study indicate that audience members exposed to the same amount of media content will manifest different outcomes (effects), depending on how they process the information.

Previous research on the cultivation effects by Carveth and Alexander (1985), Hawkins and Pingree (1982), Perse (1986), and Pingree (1983) suggest that instrumental uses of media tend to inhibit the cultivation effect. Pingree (1983), for example, hypothesized that children who were better able to make inferences about plots in television programming would exhibit the greatest cultivation effect. In fact, she found the opposite to be true. Somewhat paradoxically, the children most actively processing the programming information and most able to manipulate the information were the ones least affected by its manifest content.

The above suggests that single, working mothers are able to actively screen out cultivation effects of the traditional mainstream messages in parenting magazines. Single, working mothers, who largely reject traditional motherhood values, sift out the useful parenting and mothering information contained in parenting magazines. That is, the lifestyle attributes of single parenting and employment drive these mothers to develop a reality-based framework for interpreting the content of these publications.

Reality Monitoring Procedures

Shapiro and Lang (1991) argue that, in general, people have fairly efficient "reality-monitoring procedures," especially when their personal everyday experiences inform them in specified contexts. Only when information is scarce in a specific context do individuals make reality errors and accept distorted manifest content as "real." Along similar lines, Defleur and Ball-Rokeach (1982, p. 253) argue that "when people's social realities are entirely adequate before and during message reception, media messages will have little or no alteration effects."

The findings here are consistent with an emergent theory of media effects that argues that mediated messages are most influential in those contexts where other social forces are weak or absent. Regarding the agenda-setting function of media, research generally supports the specification of agenda-setting effects to unobtrusive issues, i.e., those that people do not experience directly (Zucker, 1978). Regarding traditional motherhood values, circumstances in the real world (e.g., married vs.

single, at-home vs. employed) exert effects on world views. Non-traditional lifestyles and values drive a need for more information. These mothers may not have the network of support available in traditional families. So they seek help from a number of sources, including parenting magazines.

When magazine content does not mesh with the objective reality of working, single moms, they may treat such content as the fiction that it is (see content analysis findings), negating cultivation effects. Such would be consistent with prior cultivation research. Regarding television soap operas, Perse (1986) found that cultivation effects were strongest among those viewers who believed that soaps reflect reality. Potter (1986) also found cultivation effects were strongest among television viewers who believe TV content reflects reality.

What of traditional moms, whose values and lifestyles are reflected in the pages of parenting magazines? The present study shows they are more likely to report they "ever read" parenting magazines but spend no more time reading them nor do they look at more issues of such publications. They are less likely to seek information about parenting and, therefore, less likely to actively process information in parenting magazines. Arguably, traditional mothers operate in an environment of low uncertainty, requiring little new information. If they read parenting magazines, they may flip through the pages, processing information through the peripheral route. Under these circumstances, mainstream messages may serve to reinforce values about motherhood already acquired through other, powerful social agents (family of origin, church, etc.).

Wither Media Criticism?

Cultivation effects provide an important empirical foundation for the criticism of media content that systematically distorts reality, perpetuates racial and gender stereotypes, and projects images of a "mean world" that feeds insecurity and distrust among the citizenry. The present study disconfirms cultivation theory with regard to parenting magazines. Cultivation effects, as narrowly defined, may well be specific to television and to those individuals without adequate reality monitoring procedures.

Media criticism takes new forms when the concepts of uncertainty and information seeking reverse the causal relationships posited in cultivation theory. Just as the manufacturing age spewed forth life-threatening industrial pollutants on a global scale, so too the information age generates its own form of digital sewage. Rather than only view audiences as passive processors of mainstream messages that cultivate distorted world views, an ecological or environmental imperative seems applicable and appropriate. Manufacturers of communication products (feature films, television programs, newspapers, magazines, radio, direct mail, etc.) should be confronted about the garbage they produce. Indeed, individual audience members may well have adequate reality monitoring procedures to sift through the garbage for kernels of useful information. The Internet, CD/ROM, and other forms of digital information distribution permit a wide social cross-section to become information providers. The gatekeeping role of the media—not its distribution role—becomes its *raison d'être*. If gatekeepers fail to sift out useless or harmful content, who needs them?

The following critique is therefore addressed to publishers of parenting magazines. The women most in need of your magazine, the ones who read your product most actively, are the ones you systematically under-represent in your manifest content. Single mothers and those who work outside the home are seeking information from a variety of sources to help them cope with a changing, evolving role of motherhood. Yet the needs and aspirations of these women are not reflected in the pages of your magazines. Instead, you serve up stereotypic images of motherhood based on lifestyle assumptions at odds with the lives of these women. In an environment increasingly cluttered with useless information, you are failing in your responsibilities as gatekeepers. You create opportunities for other gatekeepers who know your audience to step in and do your gatekeeping in your stead.

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Table 1.

Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles Typology

Lifestyle Attribute	Type Score	Percent of Sample
Currently Married Mother Working At Home	4	27%
Currently Married Mother Working Outside Home	3	49%
Currently Unmarried Mother Working At Home	2	6%
Currently Unmarried Mother Working Outside Home	1	17%

Table 2.

Measures of Passive and Active Exposure to Parenting Magazines

Passive Measures of Exposure	Mean
About how many issues of magazines about parenting have you read in the last 6 months?	5.4
About how many minutes each week do you spend reading magazines about parenting?	62.5

*Active Exposure Index	Factor Loading	Sometimes	Often
Talk about things you read in the magazines	.73	32%	23%
Remember specific articles	.68	31%	23%
Turn to magazines for parenting advice	.61	49%	12%
Clip articles	.56	17%	10%
Remember specific advertisements	.49	8%	31%

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*The five items were factor analyzed, using principle component extraction with Varimax rotation if more than one factor were extracted. Only one factor was extracted, with an eigenvalue of 1.92, explaining 38.4 percent of the variance in the item set. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the summative index of these items was .59.

Table 3.

Traditional Motherhood Values Index

Value Statement	*Factor Loading	*Percent of Sample Agreeing
Stay-at-home moms are better parents than working moms.	.73	16%
A mother should stay at home with her children until they are old enough to go to school.	.72	43%
A mother should stay in an unhappy marriage for the sake of the kids.	.61	5%
**A woman cannot have a successful career and be a good mother too.	.60	14%
I believe a mother should be the main parent to take care of the children.	.53	25%
I believe a woman should be married before she has a baby.	.47	59%

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*The six items were factor analyzed, using principle component extraction with Varimax rotation if more than one factor were extracted. Only one factor was extracted, with an eigenvalue of 2.29, explaining 38.1 percent of the variance in the item set. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the summative index of these items was .66.

*Missing responses were included in computation of this percentage.

**The original item stated that "a woman can have a successful career and be a good mother too." Item responses were reflected (agree to disagree; disagree to agree) prior to statistical analysis and wording here is consistent with the reflected meaning.

Table 4.

Parenting Information Seeking Index

Interest in free brochure on	*Factor Loading	*Percent of Sample Very Interested
Preventing child abuse	.70	48%
Teaching children to beware of strangers	.67	54%
How to find the best daycare for your budget	.67	31%
Effectively disciplining your children without spanking	.59	47%
Preventing teen pregnancy	.58	40%
How to cope with both parents working	.56	24%
Single parenting	.34	15%

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*The seven items were factor analyzed, using principle component extraction with Varimax rotation if more than one factor were extracted. Only one factor was extracted, with an eigenvalue of 2.50, explaining 35.7 percent of the variance in the item set. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the summative index of these items was .68.

Table 5.

Attributes of Motherhood and Family in Parenting Magazines and the Real World

Single Mothers	Real World Indicator	Content Analysis	Content Anaysis 95 % Confidence Interval
Articles*	22%	>1%	0% to 4%
Advertising*	22%	>1%	0% to 3%
Mothers in Work Force			
Articles*	62%	6%	3% to 9%
Visual Images*	62%	15%	12% to 18%
Advertising*	62%	4%	0% to 8%
Mothers in Professional Occupations			
Visual Images*	15%	4%	1% to 7%
Advertising*	15%	3%	0% to 7%
Mothers of Color			
Visual Images*	25%	11%	8% to 14%
Advertising*	25%	7%	4% to 11%
Fathers as Main Care Givers			
Articles*	10%	4%	1% to 6%
Visual Images	10%	16%	13% to 19%
Advertising	10%	14%	11% to 16%
Mothers 31 and Older			
Articles	30%	72%	69% to 77%
Visual Images	30%	58%	53% to 63%
Advertising	30%	41%	35% to 47%

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*Significantly distorted in the traditional direction.

Table 6.

Correlations between Passive Exposure to Parenting Magazine and Traditional Motherhood Values, Broken Down by Traditional Motherhood Lifestyle Attributes

Type*	Marital Status	Employment Status	Issues Read	N	Time Spent Reading	N
1	Single	Outside the home	-.20[1]	30	-.08[1]	31
2	Single	In the home	-.21[1]	16	+.00[1]	12
3	Married	Outside the home	-.06[1]	110	-.06[1]	108
4	Married	In the home	-.01[1]	69	-.22[1]	60
--	Single	Both in & out	-.17[1]	46	-.05[1]	43
--	Married	Both in & out	-.01[1]	181	-.12[2]	169
--	Both M & S	In the home	-.07[1]	85	-.18[2]	72
--	Both M & S	Outside the home	-.07[1]	142	-.07[1]	141

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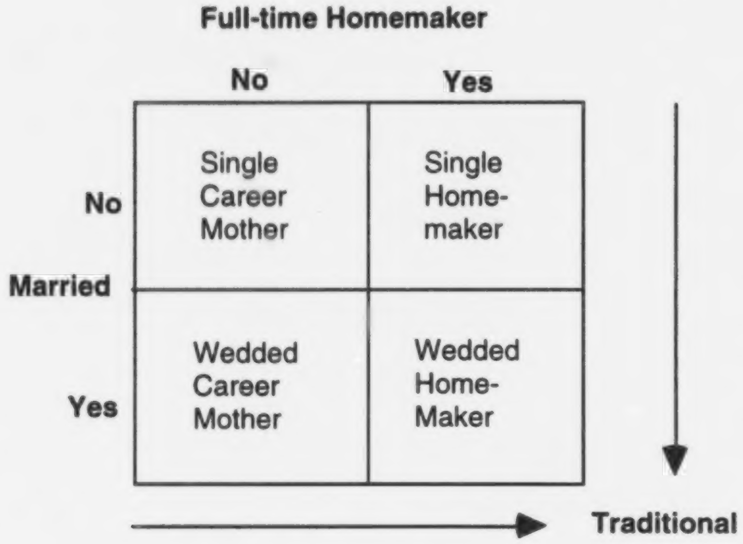
*Type scores are based on the typology displayed in Figure 1 and Table 1. Higher scores indicate higher levels of traditionalism in lifestyle attributes, based on marital and employment status.

[1] Pearson r not statistically significant at alpha=.05 or alpha=.10.

[2] Pearson r statistically significant at alpha=.10, a decision rule often invoked for sample sizes below 100 cases.

Figure 1.

Typology of Motherhood Lifestyles based on Marital Status and Employment Outside the Home



		Full-time Homemaker	
		No	Yes
Married	No	Single Career Mother	Single Home-maker
	Yes	Wedded Career Mother	Wedded Home-Maker

Figure 2.

Cultivation Model Linking Lifestyle Resonance and Passive Exposure to Traditional Worldview of Motherhood

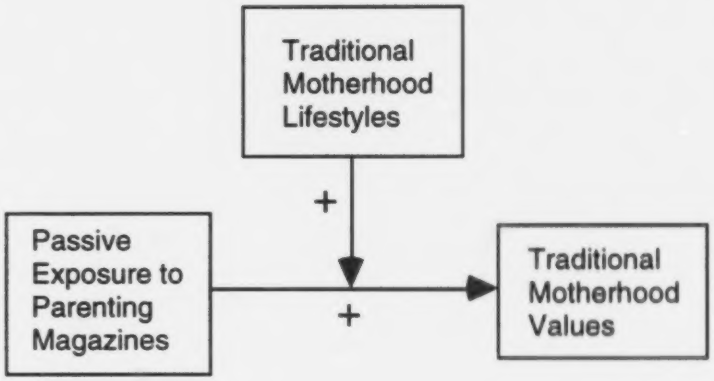

Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles
+
Passive Exposure to Parenting Magazines
+
Traditional Motherhood Values

Figure 3.

Information Seeking Model Linking Lifestyle, Values and Information Seeking to Active Exposure

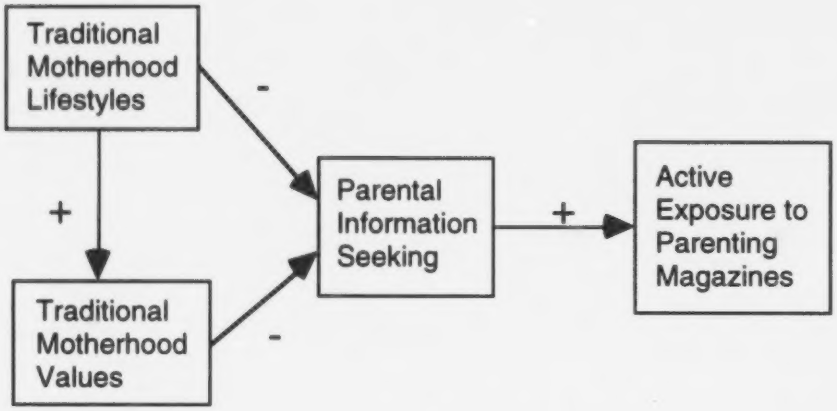

Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles
-
+
Parental Information Seeking
+
Active Exposure to Parenting Magazines
Traditional Motherhood Values
-

Figure 4.

Test of Cultivation Model Linking Issues Read in Last 6 Months, Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles, and Traditional Worldview of Motherhood

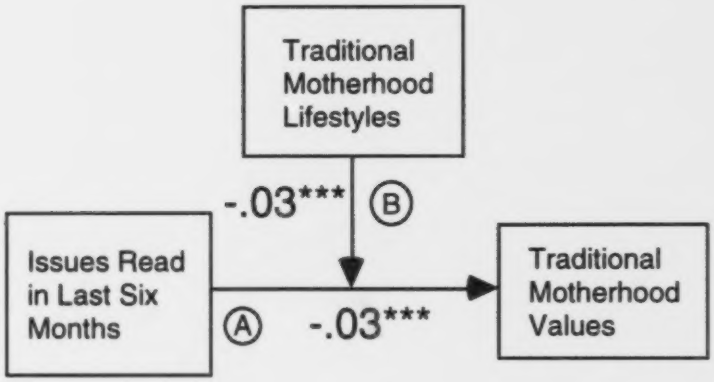
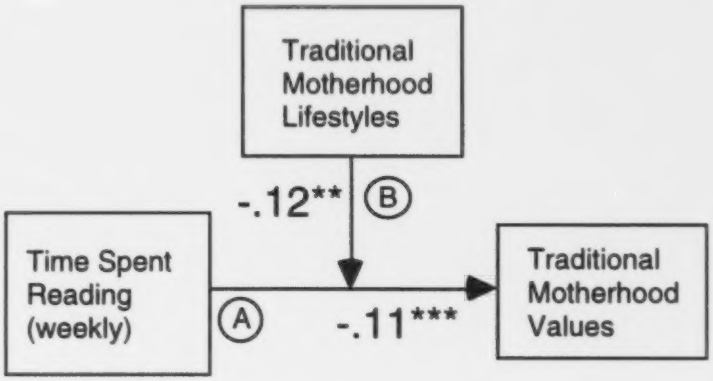

Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles
-.03***
Ⓑ
Issues Read in Last Six Months
Ⓐ
-.03***
Traditional Motherhood Values

Figure 5.

Test of Cultivation Model Linking Time Spent Reading Parenting Magazines, Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles, and Traditional Worldview of Motherhood


Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles
-.12**
Ⓑ
Time Spent Reading (weekly)
Ⓐ
-.11***
Traditional Motherhood Values

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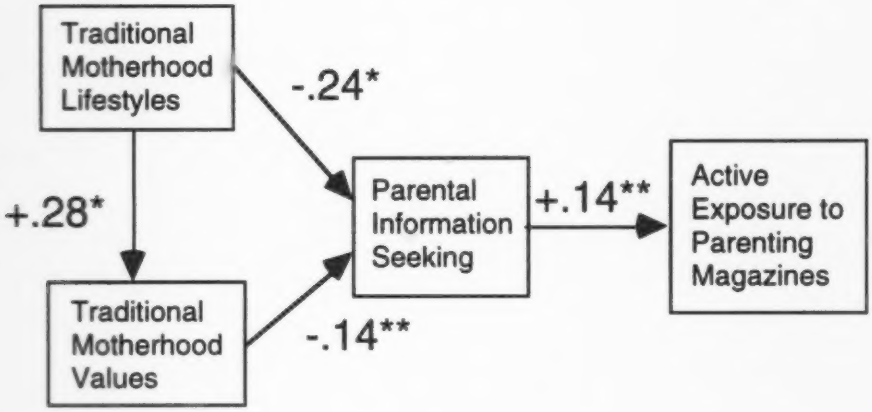
*Pearson r, p<.01 **Pearson r, p<.05 ***Pearson r, p>.05 (N.S.)

Figure 6.

Test of Information Seeking Mode! Linking Lifestyle, Values and Information Seeking to Active Exposure


Traditional Motherhood Lifestyles
-.24*
+.28*
Parental Information Seeking
+.14**
Active Exposure to Parenting Magazines
Traditional Motherhood Values
-.14**

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*Pearson r, p<.01 **Pearson r, p<.05 ***Pearson r, p>.05 (N.S.)